

THE
L I F E
John AND *Browne*
A D V E N T U R E S
OF
Mr. FRANCIS CLIVE.
In TWO VOLUMES.

*The lucky have whole Days, which still they chuse;
Th' unlucky have but hours, and those they lose.*
DRYDEN.

V O L. I.

D U B L I N:

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By Phoebe Gibbs,

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Mr. FRANCIS CLIVE.

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passions,

passions, and when left to himself soon appeared in a character the world little expected. His son Frank was, at this juncture, at Eaton school, but made his father a visit on the melancholy occasion of his mother's death. His young heart was most sensibly affected, and he had not the least doubt but his company would be acceptable, as well as essential, to sooth his afflicted parent; in fact, the father would have gladly dispensed with his presence, could he have found any decent pretext to have prevented it; but, as that was impossible, he submitted impatiently to this young spy's continuance (as he called him) during the month he had obtained leave to be absent from school.

Mrs. Clive had about her, at the time of her decease, a very pretty young woman, the daughter of an honest farmer, in the capacity of her maid; and no sooner were her mistress's remains committed to their primitive dust, than an evil dæmon, taking possession of her master's heart, represented her as an object (because amiable) worth the pains of seduction. "If I can, says he to himself, prevail upon this young creature to continue with me upon the terms I shall propose, I may preserve appearances at least for some Time; I must not shew myself till this boy is removed; however, it will not be amiss to endeavour to engage her continuance as my housekeeper, as by this means I shall be enabled to put my schemes into execution." This old debauchee accordingly sent for her into the parlour, when he and his son were at breakfast, some very short time after his wife's funeral, and addressed her in the following manner: "Hannah, said he, you see the distraction my family is in, now my dear wife is no more: I must have some prudent, trusty person in the capacity of a housekeeper, and could wish you to consult your friends, and your own inclination, whether

whether such a charge is eligible for you or not, and let me have your answer in a-day or two." Hannah curt'syed, and promised to mention it to her father and mother that very afternoon. He added, "you may tell them it is owing to the affection my wife bore you that I make you the first offer." The girl's friends were all of the undesigning, consequently unsuspecting, Kind, and therefore considered this proposal as too advantageous to be rejected, and lamented madam's death, and the good gentleman's loss, in very pathetic terms. Hannah returned, rejoicing that her continuance was approved of, as being mistress or head of a family (which to her were synonymous terms) pleased her vanity prodigiously; and Mr. Clive was no less satisfied for gaining so material a point.

This *worthy* parent was much distressed how to disencumber himself of his great boy: he had many objections to his frequent visits, which he knew would be unavoidable, if he even removed him to the university. The estate he was entitled to was equal to support one son, and pay the fortune of one daughter, without the necessary addition of trade or profession; but as there were no other means to obtain his absence, he was determined to place him in a merchant's compting-house in London, where his attendance would be always required. That this proceeding might not have the air of premeditation, he judged it best only to touch upon it slightly in this visit, and acquaint him with his future intention, as opportunity offered.

A little time before the expiration of the period limited for his return to school, his father asked him, "what profession he chose to enter into?" the son, surprized at the question, replied, "I am entirely at your disposal, sir." "why, Frank, resumed the father, I have been considering, and

indeed have experienced, that an inactive life is a very insipid one: commerce is an useful and reputable engagement; therefore I could wish you to resolve upon something: it will not render your future possession of the estate you are born to a jot less agreeable. However, continued he, perceiving some traces of chagrine in his son's countenance, there is no immediate hurry for your coming to a resolution, as any time between this and your ensuing birth-day will be soon enough." The good young man with difficulty concealed his mortification, nevertheless assured his father, "that if he would condescend to intimate the kind of life he could wish him to fix upon, he might depend upon his acquiescence, as he neither had, nor desired to have, a will of his own." Dinner being brought in, interrupted their conversation, and no more mention was made of it, till some months after his return to school, when his father signified to him by letter, "that, as he had chosen to rely upon him for disposing of him properly, he had fixed upon Mr. Benson, merchant, in London, to whose house he might repair whenever he pleased."

This was very cold treatment of an only son, so indirectly forbidden coming home, and a place pointed out for his settling in town, without once previously consulting his inclination. This behaviour appeared to him in a very hard light: "alas! said he, I find my father lives, but I also see my dear mother is no more. This proceeding is, in my opinion, both unkind and mysterious; but it is not for me to pry into the actions of a man to whom I am indebted for my existence, and every good thing I enjoy." He determined to follow his father's directions implicitly, and therefore, without attempting the least expostulation, immediately

ly went from school to this merchant's family. His sister was at the same time sent to a boarding school. Mr. Clive had many reasons for acting in the manner he did: he had but too well succeeded in his designs upon the innocent Hamah, and the consequence of their intimacy was become apparent. He faithfully promised this poor creature to marry her so soon as he could with decency, and when she acquainted him with her condition, he again assured her would save both her and her infant from shame and misery. Thus this unhappy woman was deluded with false expectations for some time, but, at length, her hardened seducer thought proper to undeceive her. "It is high time, says he, Hannah, that you and I should come to a right understanding. I acknowledge I have practised some little arts allowable upon these occasions to bring you to my wishes: depend upon it I never will abandon you, but will provide a secret, a comfortable retreat for you during your approaching extremity: the child (if it lives) shall be taken ample care of." "Ah! sir, interrupted she, is this the utmost of your intentions? you taught me to expect a vast deal more." "You are a good girl, returned he, but cannot be my wife." This was an unexpected blow, and down sunk the poor Hannah, unable to sustain it. Her master endeavoured to bring her to herself, without calling assistance, but had the mortification to find it impossible. He seated her therefore in a chair, and hastily ordered the man (in whom he had some little confidence) to attend him. The fellow obeyed, and was greatly surprised to discover the cause of his master's impatience, who said, with visible confusion, "fetch some drops, or something proper to recover this young woman, without betraying it to the family." The fellow, guessing the cause of Hannah's illness, and

his master's apprehensions, instantly ran to an apothecary's, and obtaining what was proper for the purpose, returned with the utmost expedition. Mr. Clive was extremely alarmed at the poor wretch's condition, and began to despair of her recovery: but John applying the spirits, which were very keen, to her nose and temples, she in a short time revived: on finding this man a witness of her guilt and misery, she relapsed several times: at length, however, being restored to her reason, she burst into tears, and declared, "she never would survive the publication of her shame," and cursed, in the bitterness of her heart, the author of her misfortunes. She then continued composed for some time, and again broke out into violent exclamations, "oh! said she, how little did I foresee this dreadful hour! fool that I was, to flatter myself that a man, who could be capable of forming such base designs before his excellent wife had been two days in the grave, would have either sufficient honour or conscience to perform his promises to me: my vanity has been the cause of my destruction, for had I not been blind, I never could have fallen into this hateful share. But, sir, continued she, I am not to be imposed upon a second time; help me therefore, I insist upon it, to some potion which may be the means of concealing my shame, and, should my life be the forfeit, I will freely forgive you." Her master endeavoured in vain to remonstrate with her; she cried, "I have heard too much already, and will not live to be pointed at for the wretch I am: It is possible I may escape with life, but if I do not, my disgrace and I shall both die together." Mr. Clive intreated her to be composed, offered her very large sums of money, and besought her with the utmost earnestness to fore-go her fatal resolution. "I never, never will, returned she wringing her hands, nor will I quit

quit this room until I am furnished with what I request; I will take it instantly, and patiently wait the event." John was again dispatched to a neighbouring apothecary to endeavour to procure the dreadful potion: the journeyman was his particular acquaintance, and upon making him an handsome tender, he consented to prepare him in less than an hour a draught, that should answer the desired purpose. He accordingly delivered a vial to this trusty servant, and receiving his reward, sat down fearless of the consequence; John had been absent three hours, yet found at his return, this miserable creature in the same situation, and unchanged in her resolution. He gave her the vial, having first consulted his master, and she assured him on receiving it, "that if he would promise never to reveal her shame, she would thank him with her latest breath;" this he engaged to comply with, and she immediately swallowed the dire remedy. In a short time she was seized with convulsions, and continued in them without any visible intermission for a night and a day, and then expired in dreadful agonies; she was attended by the young fellow, who had prepared this horrid Medicine, who declared that her case, though shocking, was by no means uncommon, as many persons had lately been taken off in the same manner. The family were alarmed; her friends exceedingly grieved, but the cause remained a secret for many years with these three villains.

Mr. Clive soon contracted two vices, which he was not naturally addicted to, gaming and drinking; but they contributed at first to banish reflection, and were soon established into customs; these practices he pursued for six years, in which time he mortgaged his estate, for pretty near its utmost value, and on the day that his son's articles became void, he was deprived of his father and

fortune likewise. He received the intelligence of his father's death from the servant John, who affected to condole with his young master on the melancholy occasion. The young gentleman hastened into the country, and after defraying the funeral expences, doctor's fees, and servants' wages, found his whole fortune to consist, only of three hundred pounds; yet with a piety, truly exemplary, he forebore the least reflection upon this unworthy parent's conduct; and the day before his intended return to London, called upon a nobleman's Brother in the neighbourhood, who was his god-father to pay his respects. The gentleman received him with the utmost kindness, and was not at all surpris'd at the information of his broken fortune, as Mr. Clive's circumstances and manner of life, were become notorious. He enquired into the young gentleman's future intentions, and Mr. Clive ingenuously acknowledged his design of quitting England. "I have, said he, a first cousin in the East-Indies, who has been fortunate in all his undertakings, one of my father's brothers left him about three years ago, six thousand pounds; my father had displeased him upon some trivial occasion, therefore he took not the least notice of either of us in his will. My cousin Frank has a great soul and bears me the utmost affection, we were bred to the same profession, and possibly he may have it in his power to get me into a compting-house abroad, when by industry and application I may in some few years acquire a competency. I am not ambitious, sir," continued he, a small provision will content me, nor shall I forget that I have a sister that deserves my attention." Excellent young man, said Mr. Spranger, I am really affected by your piety and resignation, and am extremely glad, that an opportunity presents itself of my being serviceable

viceable to you; my brother shall make your fortune without your contending with those difficulties which otherwise seem to threaten you, I am and will be a father to you, therefore keep up your spirits, and leave every thing to me. Mr. Clive modestly enquired in what manner this gentleman proposed serving him; his friend reply'd, my brother is appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, he shall give you an employment both of honour and profit; I know he is not yet under any engagements. If you will defer your intended journey for a couple of days, I will introduce you, and put your expectations upon a certainty. Mr. Clive expressed his gratitude in the warmest terms imaginable, and declared, that his conduct should be such, as to prevent his patron's ever repenting the honour and happiness he might confer upon him. His friend engaged him to dine with him next day, and sent him home with a joyful and grateful heart.

My lord——came down that very evening, and the good man did not fail to recommend Mr. Clive in the strongest manner, touched upon his family, expectations, education, and disappointments, in order to excite the peer's compassion, but it had quite a contrary effect. His lordship declared, that he would have done the utmost honour to his brother's recommendation, had the young fellow, whose interest he espoused, been any other than a merchant's clerk, but he feared the narrow ideas of a counting-house would but ill suit with the politeness of a court. My lord, my lord, replied the generous Mr. Spranger, this is a slight I little expected from you. The person, whose interest I would promote, is a gentleman both by birth and education, and all the mercantile rust he has contracted, is an integrity which, I dare answer for it, would remain unshaken, even amidst the contagion of your boasted court politeness; if you would not
there,

therefore give me reason to believe, that your sneer upon the merchant's clerk was meant as an affront to me; let me not solicit in vain; I can assure you, you will approve of him when you see him; he is extremely personable, and master of a pretty address; add to which he is my god-son. I have raised his expectations to a very great pitch, presuming upon my wonted influence with your lordship, and it is now in your breast, either to answer them by making his fortune and obliging me, or exposing me by a total disappointment. My lord, carelessly twirling an empty glass, replied, you know, George, how much my heart is in your power, dispose it therefore as you please: I have but few appointments at present, and confess you have taken me in time, for, excepting my first secretary, I have not another engagement; what would you wish your favourite to be? I will be modest, brother, replied Mr. Spranger, and only intreat he may have the second place in your consideration. I don't understand you, returned his lordship; why then in plain terms, replied Mr. Spranger, let this young man be your second secretary.

The good nobleman knew it was to no purpose to trifle with his brother stedfast (as he often called him from his generous perseverance in whatever cause he undertook) therefore replied, you must allow me one condition; provided it is a reasonable one, returned Mr. Spranger; then upon my honour, resumed his lordship, if your gentle youth is as unexceptionable as you have represented him, his business is done; to this Mr. Spranger assented, and the evening was concluded in mutual good humour.

Mr. Clive's heart underwent some natural agitations of hope and despair, which interrupted his repose for that night. The next morning he was dressed perfectly neat, and with as much elegance

as his gloomy appearance would admit of. When he arrived at Spranger-Hall, that humane gentleman communicated the kind of promise he had obtained from my Lord, which he said he considered as a positive one; for he had not the least doubt but his brother would be highly pleased with him. Mr. Clive's Self-love was not so strong, but he felt an apprehensive pang at the close of his friend's speech, which visibly affected his countenance, and before he had recovered himself, my lord unexpectedly dropped in upon them. As this rencounter was merely the work of chance, his lordship was vastly struck with the genteel figure of this young gentleman, and observed him with uncommon attention. Poor Mr. Clive was extremely disconcerted at the peer's particular observation, until that noblerman relieved him by saying, if this is your favourite, George, he may depend upon my best services. Did I not tell you, replied Mr. Spranger, with the utmost pleasure in his countenance, that neither gentility nor politeness was confined merely to a court. However, I thank you most sincerely for the taking him under your protection, and turning to Mr. Clive said, "I congratulate you on your appointment of second secretary to my brother." Mr. Clive bowed very gracefully, but his voice could not be distinguished at that juncture, my lord withdrew; and most condescendingly said, to this new dependant, I shall see you at dinner, sir. Mr. Spranger then entered into a particular enquiry concerning Frank's circumstances, and told him he might look upon him as his banker so far as five hundred pounds, and his honour was all the security he required for a repayment when he had it in his power. A coach stopping at the gate broke off their conversation, as, in a few minutes, a gentleman, one Mr. Elliot, his lady, and daughter entered the parlour; Miss Elliot was in her nineteenth year,

year, an extreme lovely, genteel girl: they dined together, and poor Mr. Clive found on his returning home that the young lady's beauty and accomplishments had made a very deep and singular impression upon him; his heart was dilated by his good success, and consequently more susceptible of a tender inclination, than it otherwise would have been. "How idle, said he, is it for a poor man to be creating to himself perpetual uneasiness. It is but a few hours since I had poverty and contempt staring me in the face, and no sooner has an unexpected piece of good-fortune scared those horrid spectres, than I am setting up a new grievance, which must be irremediable." I ought not to think of this lady on many accounts. If she is, as I suppose, a person of fortune, that alone would prove an insuperable impediment; if she is a dependant, and I could even prevail upon her to bestow her hand on me, it would be but soliciting her to exchange one uncertainty for another. I will endeavour to banish all remembrance of her, but surely there never was so charming a woman. He then sat down in order to make his cousin Frank acquainted with his happy prospects, to relieve him from the anxiety he knew he would experience on his account, as he had informed him the preceding week, of his father's death, and his contracted circumstances. The next morning he took a journey to see his sister, and made her an offer of taking her over to Ireland: She accepted the proposal with the greatest pleasure imaginable, and besought her brother to put a period to her school bondage, and permit her to spend the intervening months with an aunt in Gloucestershire, where she would make every necessary preparation for attending him. He complied with her requests, without the least hesitation, and discharged the governess's demands, and himself escorted her to her aunt's, where he spent two or three days. At his departure

departure he put a fifty pound note into his sister's hand, and begged she would dispose of it to the best advantage, for whatever necessities she might stand in need of ; and added, my dear sister, I am master at present of but a very limited sum, or you should have no reason to complain of my generosity. Miss Charlotte expressed the utmost gratitude for her brother's goodness, and assured him he should not have cause to be dissatisfied with her œconomy. He immediately returned to a little lodging he had engaged in London, and found there a letter from Mr. Spranger, containing a very pressing invitation of his company, and desiring he would make his house his home, during his continuance in England. A faint ray of hope darted upon his mind on the recollection, that possibly he might once more have the pleasure of seeing Miss Elliot, and as his inclination dictated, he determined to accept of this gentleman's generous offer. Nay it appeared to him, that his refusal might be construed into neglect and disrespect. The little business he had in town was soon transacted, and he impatiently repaired to Spranger-Hall. His friend received him with evident marks of esteem and approbation, and he had the satisfaction to hear, that my Lord was gone to spend three months at Bath, which agreeably exempted him from that restraint his presence involuntarily laid him under. A fortnight passed over without any thing uncommon happening, or the wished for interview with Miss Elliot being brought to bear ; his consciousness prevented his making the least enquiry concerning her, as he concluded he should infallibly betray himself, and forfeit by his folly and presumption, the good opinion and countenance of both Mr. Spranger and my lord. It seems the reason of his happiness being so long delayed, was a month's absence of that family from Elliot place on a visit. At their return a card was dis-

dispatched to Spranger-Hall requiring the company of my lord and his brother to dinner the next day: Mr. Spranger having cast his eye on the contents, returned a verbal answer, that they would certainly do themselves the pleasure of waiting upon them. Now, Frank, said the good gentleman, taking his seat, if I was not afraid of endangering your heart, I would carry you to-morrow to dine with the most agreeable neighbour we have; I have received an invitation for myself and brother, and, as he is absent, if you think you are proof against the charms of a very agreeable lady, you shall supply his place. Mr. Clive's heart immediately suggested to him, who this agreeable lady was, he endeavoured to conceal his emotion, and replied, I hope, sir, I shall never make so improper a use of the friendship you honour me with, as to imagine it authorizes me to play the fool. Young man, young man, said Mr. Spranger, interrupting him, be not too confident; this lady has had a number of admirers amongst the most sensible part of mankind, and none of them bestowed so harsh an epithet upon their passion; however, your folly, added he, if you are taken in, be your punishment; you cannot but confess you were forewarned and despised the danger; therefore be prepared by two o'clock to-morrow. Had Mr. Clive been assured the day he left London, that he should have had the pleasure of dining with Miss Elliot, within the ensuing month, he would have thought himself an happy being, but such is our strange nature, that now there were only a few hours between him and that happiness; he suffered the keenest impatience imaginable, and counted the tedious moments, which contributed to lengthen, instead of accelerating this really short period. So ingenious was he, and well skilled in the art of self-tormenting, that he dextrously contrived to labour under a painful doubt.

doubt the whole preceding night, whether Miss Elliot was the lady Mr. Spranger meant or not.

He arose next morning much earlier than his usual custom, and endeavoured to reason himself out of these boyish agitations, as he wisely called them, but he found, in spite of his wisdom, all attempts to subdue them were fruitless and ineffectual. The breakfast bell brought him before the unsuspecting Mr. Spranger, who entertained him with indifferent things, to all of which he was barely attentive, until they retired to dress. Mr. Clive had not the vanity to even attempt recommending his person, by common arts, but was rather more negligent than usual, which, as it had at least the appearance of undesign, was not without its gratefulness; he had by the time his friend was in readiness persuaded himself into a positive belief, that it was Mr. Elliot's house they were going to, and stepped into the chariot with uncommon alertness, but to the total disappointment of all his hopes, he distinctly heard his friend give orders to the servant, to drive to one Mr. Johnson's. It is impossible to describe the extraordinary effect those few syllables had upon his heart, sometimes he was tempted to feign himself ill, and beg Mr. Spranger's permission to return, then his imagination represented such a proceeding in a most ridiculous light; he was roused from these reflections by his friend telling him it was well they were going, and not upon the return from their visit; for really, Frank, said he, you have quite the countenance of a disconsolate lover. Mr. Clive was surprised into a dissimulosity, his heart severely reproached him for afterwards. "Ah! sir, said he, not the living but the dead occasioned the melancholy graces you perceive in my face." "I thought you knew," replied his friend, that there are seasons, when we should

should leave our griefs and concerns at home. Prithee clear up, added he; and do not discredit by such a rueful aspect the handsome things my lord and I have said of you." Mr. Clive endeavoured to brighten up, but his recent disappointment was too great to be soon overcome, and he retained a truly tragi-comic countenance, until the carriage stopped at a little neat box, and on the servant's alighting, Mr. Spranger ordered him to beg the favour of Mr. Johnson, just to step but for a few minutes, to the coach-door, as he had almost exceeded the family's dinner hour where he was engaged. This threw our young lover into a new dilemma, and revived in some degree his former hopes, notwithstanding he laboured to suppress them, apprehensive of a second disappointment; after a few compliments exchanged between the two gentlemen, and a message delivered from my lord by his brother, Mr. Spranger said to the servant, on Mr. Johnson's retiring to some little distance,—To Mr. Elliot's. Mr. Clive began now to think it incumbent upon him to amuse his friend with some kind of conversation, and as no subject was so agreeable to him as his admired lady, he flattered himself he had now a fair opening for mentioning her, and forcing a smile, he said, "you might, sir, have spared your kind caution with respect to my heart, for I have already seen the lady," and your heart remains untouched, retorted Mr. Spranger; Mr. Clive hesitated exceedingly in shifting about for a reply; "well, well, continued his friend, you are not at a confession, so consequently not under a necessity of revealing your sentiments, but if you have escaped whole once, remember the old proverb and keep upon your guard."

They soon arrived at the house of Mr. Elliot, which was really a magnificent one. This gentleman had four children, one son and three daughters,
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the eldest of which was Miss Charlotte; her father's fortune was such, that it was expected these ladies would have a very handsome provision. Miss Charlotte was so far independent as to have twelve thousand pounds, the legacy of a good old aunt, in her own disposal from the day she was eighteen. The gentlemen were shewn into an elegant drawing-room, where was Mrs. Elliot, and her two little girls, ready to receive them. "Madam, said Mr. Spranger, I thought to have taken the liberty of introducing a stranger, but I find this young gentleman has had the pleasure of spending a day in your company at my house." "I think, replied she, I have some remembrance of him, but his being your acquaintance is a sufficient recommendation." "You are very obliging, madam, returned Mr. Spranger, but I must, as I am a bachelor, take shame to myself, when I acknowledge this young gentleman for my son; his mother was an amiable woman, and poor Frank had an infinite loss in being deprived of her; do you find any resemblance?" "Upon my word I don't, returned the Lady, nor do I credit your fine story; you have so often imposed upon me one way or other, that my opinion of your veracity is totally destroyed; but supposing the case, as you have represented it, whatever cold looks I might think you entitled to, I should by no means be blind to the young gentleman's merit, for I have learned to distinguish so far, at least, in this respect, as not to confound the innocent with the guilty. Pray, sir, said she, addressing Mr. Clive, do you acknowledge this bold man for your father?" "It is, madam, a title that reflects too much honour upon me, for me even to wish to disclaim it." "Well said, Frank, cried the honest man, you are a good boy. What think you now, madam?" "That you are a wicked instructor, replied the lady, and have a very apt pupil,

pupil; in which light I shall consider you both, until I hear what you have to say for yourselves before Mr. Elliot, who is just returned, added she." This gentleman saluted his guest with great politeness, but expressed much concern, at not seeing my lord. My dear, said his wife, we are indebted to his lordship's absence for a notable discovery; would you believe it, your worthy friend, of whose principles and conduct you have so often expressed the highest approbation, has introduced that gentleman as his acknowledged son, and the gentleman truly claims him, as an honour, for his beloved parent; I am well convinced they are both impostors, and plainly told them, I would wait your return for their detection. Miss Charlotte listened with great attention to this conversation, as she found her heart in some measure interested in the explanation of it. If that is the case, returned Mr. Elliot, we can have no hopes of working upon such an hardened sinner as our neighbour, and it is unjustifiable to attack the innocent, therefore we must leave the unravelling of this mystery to time.

You do well, my friend, replied Mr. Spranger, to give up a knotty point; I promise you we should have puzzled even your sagacity; I am not his father, either by nature or adoption; but at once to prevent every slur your malicious hearts might be inclined to cast upon my tender reputation, henceforth know him for my God-son, his name Clive, and secretary to my brother in his new appointment. This lady, continued he, turning to Miss Charlotte, is my inducement for wishing to stand fair in your opinions, as I would not have you think unfavourable of your intended son-in-law. Poor Mr. Clive's heart felt this last expression most severely. He doubted not but Mr. Spranger beheld this lovely lady with the same eyes and sentiments.

timents as he himself did, and as he was a man of family, fortune, and merit, conceived it possible, that his addressees might be favoured by the whole family in general. O! whispered his heart, how terrible is it, that the same hand that has raised me from the misery of poverty, should plunge me into a greater! I am mad, unquestionably mad, for nothing but frenzy could dictate such extravagant notions. Dinner was immediately served up, the good humoured Mr. Spranger was the life of the company, and seemed to be almost idolized by this worthy family, with whom they continued until eleven o'clock. Mr. Clive had passed the day (from his own reflection) very unhappily; he both wished for, and dreaded the parting hour; he felt a variety of new passions, gaining an establishment in his mind, which he had ever till then been a stranger to; preevishness, impatience, suspicion and jealousy, perplexed him to the last degree. On taking their leave Mr. and Mrs. Elliot, in a very obliging manner, desired they might see him often during his continuance in that part of the country. In their return home, Mr. Spranger said a great many kind things, and repeated his assurances of an entire friendship. "Frank, said he, I am not so light-minded as to be sudden in my attachments; consequently, when I am once taken, I am fixed. Every day you spend with me gives me some new instance of your merit, and I will assure you, your modest, unassuming behaviour procures you approbation every where. I think myself particularly happy in having had the power of placing you in such an advantageous light, and doubt not, but I shall live to see you a great man." Mr. Clive made a very grateful, but concise reply, and took occasion to say how much he admired the family they had just quitted: They are most valuable people

ple, I assure you, said Mr. Spranger, and your sensibility of their good qualities does honour to your judgment; I have had such stupid lads with me in my time, that they have considered a visit to Mr. Elliot, as doing penance, but you have only answered my expectations in approving them. Pray how stand you affected with respect to my wife, I reckon her capable of pleasing both the eye and the ear." The mask of night was on his face, therefore he replied with a tolerable grace, "I really think her a very amiable lady. "Ah! returned Mr. Spranger, she is a girl of ten thousand, free from affectation, pride and vanity, and possesses so sweet and gentle a disposition, as is scarce to be equalled: The others are promising agreeable children, but they are only children, consequently do not engage so much of one's attention. They were now arrived at the hall, and having broke into the morning, as Mr. Spranger phrased it, they separated immediately for their respective apartments.

As soon as Mr. Clive was alone, what a detestable being, cried he, am I suddenly become, disingenuous, envious and base. How am I imposing upon Mr. Spranger's goodness of heart by a show of gratitude, and a million of other qualities, I have not the least pretension to; to-morrow morning I will undeceive him if my destruction is the consequence; my good fortune shall not be built upon such vile foundations, as fraud and deceit; how do I degenerate, continued he, from that excellent woman my dear mother, who so industriously formed my then tender and pliant mind to virtue. I was not then run so rank, nor my depraved nature arrived at the degree of refractoriness and baseness it has since attained. I will not, however, split upon a rock with my eyes open, to-morrow morning shall save me from myself."

self." With this resolution he endeavoured to compose himself; but past a very restless and disagreeable night. In the morning his friend took notice of his altered looks; "I hope, said he, Frank, with a kind solicitude in his countenance, you are not ill." "My countenance, replied Mr. Clive, is more sincere than my heart; I am really much disorder'd, but it is my mind, good sir, not my body that is affected: you now see before you the most wretched being upon earth, notwithstanding the favours you have heaped upon me; my unworthiness is my bane. Withdraw, sir, I intreat you, your good opinion of me, believe me base, disingenuous and selfish, I shall then have the consolation of not imposing upon my best, my only friend." Mr. Spranger was shocked at the wildness of his looks and expressions, and endeavoured to sooth him into some composure, he absolutely concluded he was delirious, and as his hand was warm, took it for granted he was seized with a violent fever; therefore gently advised him to go to bed. "Ah! sir, said Mr. Clive, I again assure you I have only a distempered mind; the lady, whom you so deservedly esteem, has drawn me out in my true colours, yet do not despise me, sir, my presumption is involuntary, but my repentance shall be sincere. I will with your permission pursue my first scheme, perhaps change of climate, and close application to business, may repair my shattered reason, as I will there, sir, forget you, myself, and the too charming Miss Elliot." Mr. Spranger's eyes were immediately opened; many circumstances occurred to his remembrance which confirmed his opinion, that the young man was in love; he took him by the hand: "Frank, said he, I am really surprized at your behaviour, but I give you my honour I am not offended. It is my own indiscretion, or rather chance, that has brought

brought this evil upon you, and I am too sensible of the lady's charms to wonder at the effect they have had upon your young mind; but bear it like a man; love is not a passion that degrades, but exalts our nature; you are just entering into life, this spur, if properly used, may prove advantageous; instead of sneaking off to the East-Indies, set about making your fortune in Ireland, you have no other bar to surmount, that I know of, your education and morals are in my opinion unexceptionable; why, boy, instead of turning you adrift, I will be your friend and confidant. I would cast off the underhand dealer, but your openness and generosity deserve, and shall meet with encouragement." "O! sir, said Mr. Clive, your condescension and goodness are astonishing, (but hesitating,) pardon me, dear sir, you yourself admire Miss Elliot." "As a good girl, and the daughter of my friend, returned Mr. Spranger, no otherwise upon my honour; could you conceive me, at my time of day to be such a puppy, as to be ambling after a blooming young creature, who, with great propriety, might have been my granddaughter. No, no, Frank, it is your not being acquainted with the character of your friend, that has led you into such a ridiculous error; you will be convinced by and by that I have pretty near the same designs, and am considered in a similar light by every miss of my acquaintance; love is a youthful inclination, but in age merits a coarser epithet; come, my boy, continued this good man, eat your breakfast, and intrust the management of this business of your heart, to your rival; I promise you, you shall be treated with both candour and lenity. You must, however, submit to one condition." Mr. Clive promised an implicit obedience to every proposition. "Steady and slow, cried the old gentleman, perhaps you may not find your
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your compliance altogether so easy as you imagine, as you must engage never more to see or converse with this lady, without my knowledge and permission: I will feel her father's pulse, and if I do not find him averse to bestowing his daughter in due time upon a rising young man, you shall have my consent to win her and wear her. Mr. Clive was unable to express his gratitude, with the least coherency; but he was eloquent in silence, which was far more acceptable with the honest hearted Mr. Spranger. This gentleman possessed a very large fortune, which not only himself, but his neighbours of every denomination enjoyed. My lord married his sister, a fine woman, with a fortune of seventy thousand pounds; she lived only two years after marriage, and dyed childless. It was appointed by her marriage settlements, that, in case of her decease without issue, half her fortune should revert to her family, an advantage which the generous brother had waved, though not absolutely renounced; he really esteemed his lordship, and his lordship had a great veneration for money, so that the generosity of the one and the avarice of the other, were in their consequence as happy as the strictest amity. My lord had credit at all times with Mr. Spranger, and Mr. Spranger had in return complaisance and deference at all times from my lord: this good understanding remained unshaken for the whole course of three and twenty years. Let no one then hereafter dare to affirm, that constant attachment is incompatible with the hearts of *peers*, or *peers* with constant attachment. As to the nobleman he was in the bloom of fifty three, graceful in his person, and engaging in his behaviour; he was of an amorous complexion, enterprizing to rashness in his genius, and deeply versed in every species of artifice and dissimulation. But to return, Mr. Clive endeavoured to

appear as satisfied as possible, though his heart laboured under much anxiety. Mr. Spranger, without making the least mention of his intentions, took a ride over the next morning to Mr. Elliot's, with a determination to make such proposals on behalf of Mr. Clive, as must be acceptable; "shall I, said he, that have not one near relation to inherit my large possessions, let a deserving lad pine away his best days in pain and misery without attempting to relieve him; I know his want of this cursed money, will cast an imperious mist over his great merit, but it shall be dispelled; I have taken upon me the care of his spiritual, and will not neglect his temporal good; no, no, as he hereafter approves himself worthy, so shall he be considered by me, I will however, let him remain ignorant of my designs, until I see how he will make his way with trifling assistances.

Mr. Spranger left his horse a quarter of a mile from Mr. Elliot's house, and walking over, entered with that friendly familiarity, that ever distinguishes an honest, unreserved disposition. He found the whole family together, breakfast being just over: "come, come, said he, my little friends, the air this pleasant morning, will do you more good than sitting here, besides, I have some private business with your papa and mama; they rose immediately: sir, said Miss Charlotte, must I likewise withdraw, "why really, replied Mr. Spranger, a man ought to conceal nothing from his wife, but I believe for once, I must break through a maxim I otherwise highly approve, so, my dear, on this occasion, bowing humbly, I beg your pardon,—away tripped the young lady.

Mr. Elliot, said the good gentleman, taking his seat, I am seriously come over this morning on a very singular account, and it is proper (as a father

ther and mother are equally concerned,) that you both should hear what I have to propose. I desire the friendship and partiality you bear me may be waved upon this occasion, and that you will weigh my proposal as strictly and accurately, as if I was an intire stranger. Mr. and Mrs. Elliot looked on each other with surprise, and Mr. Spranger proceeded, "It is necessary you should favour me with one piece of information, however, before I open the case. Is Miss Charlotte, for ought you know to the contrary, perfectly disengaged in her affections. They both answering without hesitation in the affirmative, Mr. Spranger resumed, "a great point gained. It is at the request of a particular friend, that I have undertaken this matter. Miss Charlotte has made an absolute conquest of a very sincere young gentleman, whose heart, till he beheld her, was untouched, his expectations are genteel, his character unexceptionable, and if we can settle the preliminaries, we will leave the rest to the young folks. What fortune, sir, would you require in a son-in-law?" Mr. Elliot replied, "Charlotte's fortune, so far as twelve thousand pounds, is intirely in her own disposal, by the appointment of her aunt, whose favourite she was, I shall add a trifle to it, continued he, at my death; but, as I have other children, must make a provision for them first, answerable to Charlotte's legacy. I am not ambitious in my views, and would rather know my children happy with a bare competency, than miserable in affluence." "Sir, replied Mr. Spranger, you have now convinced me that nothing is impossible, in increasing by your present conduct, that esteem and good opinion I have so long entertained, and which I had concluded was incapable of addition; I will now communicate every particular. My boy, whom I brought to dine with

you the day before yesterday, is the youth in question. His mother, as I then mentioned, was a most amiable woman, allied to nobility, though not so much in favour with that blind strumpet fortune as might have been wished; his father married her at a very early time of life, and was at that period, (and continued till her death,) in possession of a clear estate of eight hundred pounds a year. She left him two children, this boy and a very pretty little girl; but he taking an unhappy turn to drinking, and several other extravagant vices, in six years time was so industrious as to dip his estate for pretty near its full value, and leave his children almost destitute. He placed my Frank at fifteen in a merchant's family under pretence of shewing him the world, but in reality to free himself from the restraint of a virtuous youth; his girl was turned out to a boarding school, nor did he permit either of them to return to his house during his life, and kept them in a cruel ignorance with respect to his circumstances. The young fellow proposed going abroad, but I prevented him, and have obtained my brother's interest and protection for him. I don't love to promise too largely, but as I have not a relation I care a farthing for, except my lord, perhaps I may make him my heir, but be that as it may, he has shewn such a disposition of ingenuity and integrity, that if twenty thousand pounds can render him acceptable with you, and his accomplishments engage the lady's affections, I am ready to secure that sum to himself immediately." Mr. and Mrs. Elliot intirely acquiesced with this proposal, and said, they would prepare their daughter to give him a proper reception. Mr. Spranger replied, "as you know I am very whimsical, you will not be surprized at what I have now to mention; it is my request that this matter may not be revealed to Miss Charlotte.

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The instrument shall be prepared with the utmost expedition, that shall put it out of my power to retreat, let me be ever so wickedly disposed. I chuse not to acquaint Frank, with either what I now do, or intend doing for him. My lord, I am confident will make a handsome provision for him; therefore, if you please, this twenty thousand pounds, shall lye dormant, and receive the increase of the yearly interest it produces: they are both young enough to stay, until he has an establishment; besides, I am a little curious to know the utmost depth of him, which would be impracticable, if we made him immediately independent; I will just signify to him that I have obtained your joint permission for his visiting at your house, and endeavouring to recommend himself to Miss Elliot's favour, but that he shall give me his honour, not to mention that circumstance to the lady, by which means we shall discover both their natural dispositions. Your daughter shall have the whole twenty thousand pounds settled upon her and her heirs, and Frank shall be intrusted in exchange, with the absolute management of her present fortune. What say you, my friend, added he, to the old man's whim?

They submitted every thing to his direction, and he took his leave highly delighted with his proceedings. At his return home, he found Frank in his study reading Plato on the immortality of the soul; the old gentleman smiled at his serious employment, but took no notice at that juncture of the visit he had been making, but, as he was naturally communicative, especially when he could give satisfaction, he could not contain himself any longer, than until the dinner and servants were withdrawn. "Frank, said Mr. Spranger, I have seen my wife this morning; O fye, what a face is there? I have likewise seen her father, and, to

relieve you at once from all your anxiety, have obtained leave for you to visit at his house as often as you please; nay, further, continued he, you are permitted to say every tender thing your heart can dictate to Miss Charlotte, but you are not to inform her, that all this is with our privity and consent, on pain of incurring both Mr. Elliot's and my displeasure. We have hopes of seeing you in such a capacity as may authorize your pretensions to my friend's daughter, but remember your conduct will undergo a strict scrutiny, for it cannot be expected, that a man will bestow so valuable a child as Miss Elliot, but where he is convinced there is true merit." "O! sir, replied Mr. Clive, how shall I,—" if you think yourself obliged to me, returned Mr. Spranger, interrupting him, prove it by your actions, and do not trouble yourself with making speeches; I love you, or I should not behave as I do, continue but to deserve my affection, I shall consider that as ample amends. I must get you, continued he, to do me a favour to-morrow, it is to go to London to deliver a letter of consequence for me, you may return as speedily as you please. Mr. Clive's heart was elated to a degree at the prospect of enjoying the company and conversation of this lady, and he looked upon the injunction of his friend as a very gentle one, and easy to be complied with, though had it threatened him with the utmost difficulty, he was determined to adhere to it. The next day he arrived in London, and waited upon the gentleman according to Mr. Spranger's directions, who was a man of eminence in the law, delivered the letter, little imagining how materially he himself was concerned in the contents. That business dispatched, Mr. Clive was induced by the heart's ease he enjoyed, to make his sister a present to give her a chance for independance. Poor Charlotte,

lotte, said he, has nothing but what must be immediately conferred by me, which to a generous mind is undoubtedly painful. A life of obligation I could not brook, had I any other heart than my worthy friend's to deal with, he has the art of bestowing and reconciling you to the greatest bounties imaginable; with these sentiments he stepped into a lottery office, and purchased a ticket for his sister, then immediately going to a coffee-house, it being post night, he enclosed it in a few lines, (having first taken the number of it) and sent it off directly. He had not been many hours in London, yet began to be vastly dissatisfied, his time hung heavy on his hands, and he sighed for Spranger-hall, for many reasons. He determined to leave town the next morning, and flattered himself Mr. Spranger would consider his speedy return as a proof of his diligence; but the old gentleman was accustomed to look deeper than the surface. He went that evening to the play, the tragedy of Cato was acted, and he found himself uncommonly interested for, and affected by the distresses of those illustrious lovers. He did not stay the entertainment, being unwilling to exchange the pleasing though melancholy impression the play had left upon his mind, for the idle tricks and childish deception of Harlequin. The next evening he presented himself to Mr. Spranger, who told him he knew the magic by which he was attracted. The ensuing day Mr. Elliot's family made a visit at the hall, when Mr. Clive feasted both his eyes and ears; Miss Charlotte performing at the request of the company several excellent pieces of music. Three weeks passed over in one continued sameness, the lady pleasing and her lover pleased, without his having made one attempt to tell her so, when Mr. Elliot, in order as he said to rouse them a little from the still life

into which they were sunk, proposed giving a ball to the young people of the country : Mr. Clive was of the invited number, but felt much perplexity at the bare apprehension of seeing Miss Charlotte the partner of any one but himself, yet was fearful, lest an attempt on his part, to secure that happiness, might be deemed presumption; he, however resolved to consult Mr. Spranger. Accordingly the day before this entertainment, eating their breakfast, with more timidity and circumlocution than the case required, he mentioned it to his godfather. This good gentleman replied, I believe, Frank, you will never give me cause to be dissatisfied with you; therefore you have a right to my utmost indulgence; it is not only agreeable to me, that you should previously engage the lady, but I also highly approve it; it is long since my heart glowed with youthful inclination, or I should not be so inattentive to yours, but you have only to intimate your wishes, and if possible they shall be complied with. I will take you over this afternoon on purpose. O! sir, said Mr. Clive, how amply is the utmost parental indulgence multiplied upon my head; how can I remember I am an orphan under such happy circumstances? In me, I repeat to you, returned his friend, you shall ever find a parent, you yourself must supply that character to your sister; when, added he, did you hear from her. I had a letter last week, said Mr. Clive, I propose taking her over to Ireland with me, as we have many relations in that kingdom, if you, sir, approve it. Frank, replied the old gentleman, I must be plain with you upon this subject, I think it will be highly improper for so young a man, unless you had a wife for a companion and sanction, to take a pretty sister as an house-keeper, she would be too much exposed to visitants of our sex, and without the least reflection upon her prudence, such a situation might

might be productive of very disagreeable consequences. The Irish gentlemen are enterprising by nature, and gallantry their chief characteristic, they take their glass freely, and would be under too little restraint at the house of a bachelor, was your sister at such a juncture to meet with only an affront, think what a train of ills you might draw upon yourself, as a brother could not but resent the smallest indignity. It is therefore my advice, that she remain in England, until a change in your condition. I acknowledge, sir, said Mr. Clive, I did not see this scheme in such a light as you have now opened my eyes to; how salutary is the voice of prudence to the young and inexperienced; I will write immediately to my sister, and make her sensible of the impropriety of my proposal, lest she should impute my flying off to either levity or unkindness; I would not hurt her for the world. "Excellent young man," said Mr. Spranger, but you forget we are to make a visit this afternoon; I suppose you would chuse to make some improvement in your dress." "Neatness, sir," said Mr. Clive, I am sure you cannot discommend; I aim at nothing further." They found on their arrival a great deal of company at Elliot Place, which gave Mr. Clive a better opportunity of conversing with his admired fair one. Mr. Spranger observing they were engaged in some little chat, advanced, and addressing Miss Charlotte with his wonted good-humour, "As my dancing days are over, wife, if you will honour our son with your hand to-morrow, you will oblige me much, as I shall then be free from every jealous pang; the young lady obligingly consented, and Mr. Clive became in imagination the happiest man alive. He appeared to much greater advantage than usual, the satisfaction of his heart visibly enlivening his countenance, and also encouraging him to display his natural good understand-

ing on several occasions. Mr. Spranger gave Mr. and Mrs. Elliot a significant nod, to smother the young man, and they returned a smile of approbation. Miss Charlotte informed her mama, that Mr. Clive had engaged her for a partner, and betrayed a consciousness she did not intend, by adding it was likewise the request of Mr. Spranger, as if she thought what she had done, required an apology. The next day this lady appeared lovely to a degree, though unornamented, and the evening was spent with much satisfaction and decorum. Mr. Clive was unanimously declared the best dancer, a compliment he would not have felt, but from the hope that it would not be disagreeable to Miss Elliot, to have her partner approved. As he conducted the lady to and from the withdrawing room, he had the courage to press her hand, and whisper, charming Miss Elliot! she hastily withdrew it, but it was apparent, she was more apprehensive of the company's observation, than offended at the liberty. They broke up at one o'clock, and Mr. Spranger, with the pride of a real parent, exulting in his boy's superiority, carried him home. "Frank, said he, in the fulness of his heart, you do please me prodigiously; and doubt not but you perceive it, notwithstanding I cannot forbear telling you so." The young gentleman felt great pleasure in recollecting over and over the trivial circumstance, with respect to Miss Elliot already mentioned; there was no displeasure he would frequently say, in his soliloquies, in her lovely countenance, I am persuaded she did not condemn me. He was certainly right in his conjectures, for Miss Elliot's heart was in reality as well affected towards him, as he could possibly have wished. She trembled for the consequence; alas! she would say, when alone, how little does my papa and mama consider their daughter's peace, in so often exposing her to the

the company and conversation of the agreeable Mr. Clive? they would be highly displeased, if they knew the ground he has gained in my approbation, though nothing but absolute insensibility could have secured me from what I feel. What his sentiments are of me I know not, nor am I acquainted with his expectations or connexions, yet am I daily, increasing my good opinion of him, and consequently my own uneasiness, without a possibility of my avoiding him, if I was ever so much disposed for it.

Mr. Clive received a letter from his cousin Frank, which as it is a lively picture of an honest and generous mind, I shall present my readers with it.

“Dear Frank,

I should be infinitely more concerned at the disagreeable circumstances you labour under, had I not the power, in some measure, of extricating you from them. Your father—but I will, for your sake, spare his memory, as it is for your sake only; I could be induced to disturb the ashes of the dead. Thank God! I have sufficient for us both, therefore intreat you would continue in England, until my return, when you shall share my fortune and profession. The dear Charlotte, something must be thought of for her; but we will never blush on account of neglect in that respect. Depend upon me to the utmost of my ability, you know you have an equitable claim; for had the old gentleman, to whom I am greatly indebted, done you justice, we should have been upon an equality, without my being obliged to solicit it. I shall be over in either four or six months, the enclosed letter is intended for your use, consequently the more it is occupied,

occupied, the greater will be the happiness and obligation of

your affectionate friend,

and servant,

F. CLIVE."

Inclosed was a letter of general credit upon his partner. Mr. Clive communicated this friendly epistle to Mr. Spranger, "who thanked God there was in the world so good a young man. We have no need of his kind assistance; yet, added he, he has had an opportunity of shewing his goodness of heart, and will meet with his reward accordingly. The time of my lord's return from Bath, now approached, and Mr. Clive would gladly have been excused continuing any longer at Spranger-Hall, had not his visits to Mr. Elliot's depended upon it. He had frequent opportunities of seeing Miss Charlotte, and was convinced more and more from her behaviour, that he was not disagreeable to her. One afternoon in particular by some chance or other they were left alone for two whole hours; they had been reading in the St. James's Chronicle, and met with an extraordinary advertisement in the name of a lady, for an husband. "Surely, said Miss Elliot, this must be a fiction, I can never believe a woman of character could be guilty of such an indecorum." "Madam, replied Mr. Clive, there are many female characters in the world, which Miss Elliot can have no idea of, as she is too apt to pass that candid judgment upon others, which only herself can merit." You may depend upon it, those ladies, who submit to these public applications, have it not in their power to chuse from a number of admirers, the one they think most worthy; it is not with them, as with a lady of my acquaintance, impossible to behold them with indifference, or converse with

with them without losing both heart and soul. Had they Miss Elliot's accomplishments, added he, with a particular emphasis, they would not be under the necessity of having recourse to such indelicate means." "You are very gallant, sir, upon my word, returned Miss Elliot." "Ah! madam, said Mr. Clive, do not miscale the true sentiments of my heart gallantry; my circumstances lay me under a restraint; had I millions to offer, I would not have imposed so cruel a silence upon myself, but madam, continued he, my actions, my eyes must have betrayed me, and could I but flatter myself with the most distant hope of obtaining your approbation, on an improvement of my fortune, what a noble incitement should I have to push my success in life, and should not then doubt but every pecuniary objection would be soon removed." "Sir, replied the lady, it is owing to a want of knowledge of my disposition, that you lay such a stress upon the advantage of fortune; the man that with millions I ever could approve, deprived of those possessions, would still retain my utmost approbation; but we are got upon a wild subject, and beg we may change it." "Pardon me, madam, said Mr. Clive, I would not for the world offend you, but may I be permitted to ask you one single question." Miss blush'd, but not opposing his request, he continued, "were I in possession of such a fortune, as would recommend me with your papa and mama, and could obtain their sanction for an application of this nature; have I much to apprehend from Miss Elliot?" "Since you require me to be explicit, sir, returned this young lady, I must tell you, that without the sanction of my good father and mother, no person would ever receive the least encouragement, but I must beg, sir, you would never more attempt engaging me upon such a subject, if you really esteem me; you would not wish me to fail in.

in that duty and deference my relations are intitled to." "Far be it from me, madam, returned Mr. Clive, to entertain such unworthy sentiments, but one more favour and I never will again offend; can none of your admirers boast of a preference in your good opinion?" "That my heart is free, sir, replied Miss Elliot, I make no scruple to acknowledge, but you are not to infer from thence, that I am incapable of distinguishing merit, or setting a just value upon it, when I do discover it; I now claim your promise, sir, and shall consider a future breach of it, as an affront both to my duty and understanding." The peremptory manner, in which this lady pronounced these words, thoroughly convinced Mr. Clive of their sincerity; his philosophy, nay his integrity, received a shock; and for the first time he felt the weight of that condition imposed upon him, and too late blamed his sanguine self-dependance. He was strongly tempted to forfeit his honour to his friend, in order to obtain his beloved mistress, but the recollection, that even what he then enjoyed was the reward of his former ingenuousness, he determined not to deviate from those principles, by the observance of which his preceding actions had not only been regulated, but successful. After a short struggle, he replied, madam, you shall be obeyed, but as I desire to live only for Miss Elliot, surely she will be so generous, so compassionate, as to remember at intervals, such a being does exist for her sake." The young lady was too prudent to make any reply, but intirely acquiesced with her heart. Mr. Clive's countenance was again overclouded, which was soon perceived by the discerning Mr. Spranger; and as the private interview of these lovers, though in appearance accidental, was in reality preconcerted by the confederate parties; he immediately imputed this sudden change to some discouragement he had received, and took him to task.

task on their return home. "What, said he, Frank, is your vivacity in a second eclipse? how stands the young lady affected? I suppose by your acting the knight with the sorrowful countenance, you have met with some little repulse?" an absolute one, sir, replied Mr. Clive; the young lady declares, that she will never listen to any thing of this nature, without her papa and mama's sanction." "Good girl, said Mr. Spranger, but could you not wheedle her out of this resolution; for notwithstanding I myself was never expert at these matters, I have heard ladies are to be softened by gentle persuasions." "Then, sir, returned Mr. Clive, they must be ladies of a different cast to Miss Elliot, for she has forbid my ever again even intimating my wishes on the penalty of never conversing with her more." "And were you not tempted, Frank, to forego the articles of agreement, interrogated Mr. Spranger; be honest now, you shall not lose by it." "Sir, replied Mr. Clive, I do confess I felt a very strong temptation to fall from my integrity, but, as all my former success was the result of that single virtue, I determined not to forfeit it, let what would be the consequence." "A brave resolution, cried the delighted old gentleman, and worthy as brave: Well, but Frank, added he, you must tell me how you intend to proceed." "Ah! sir, replied Mr. Clive, I cannot advance another step whilst your interdiction is in force; and would not expose myself to Miss Elliot's displeasure on any condition, nor will I ever act dishonourably by you." "Then I suppose, returned Mr. Spranger, you are willing to quit the chace;" "Can that be an inference, sir, replied the afflicted lover; rather do me the justice to believe, I shall again endure similar pangs with those you so generously relieved me from." "No wheedling, Frank, returned Mr. Spranger, no wheedling; I know what passes at
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this instant in your rebellious hear; my former generosity, as you call it, must aggravate my present cruelty, but have a good heart, continued he, we may perhaps find a remedy for this evil also, if you will trust me to take two or three visits by myself; for, unless I can discover by Charlotte's behaviour, that she is really sensible of your merit, we shall be all at a stand. I would have this a match of affection intirely, with respect to the young party; the provident shall be our care, nor must a shadow of restraint be put upon the lady's inclination. I would be cruel, Frank, as Hamlet says, only to be kind; you understand me; this one material point gained, I promise you, you shall have fair play, my boy." Mr. Clive sighed, but made no reply. "What, continued Mr. Spranger, you think I am prescribing hard lines, but I assure you, your task shall be rendered as easy as possible.

Mr. Clive was obliged to appear satisfied with this assurance, and was as much so in reality, as this uncertain condition would admit. Mr. Spranger was not deficient on his part, he went over a couple of days to his friends, and was near carrying his jesting humour too far. Miss Charlotte was so prudent as to be too much upon her guard, for even his discernment to make the least discovery; when first he arrived, he examined her looks with great attention, in which she did not betray either curiosity or concern. "What, said he archly, is the old husband welcome, though unaccompanied by the gallant Mr. Clive?" "Had my husband, replied the cautious maid, any reason to complain of his reception before the name of Clive was known to this family?" "So cold, fair lady, returned Mr. Spranger, I find your hearts are not kindred ones, or sympathy would not be wanting; but perhaps, added he, you are insensible by nature, or have

met with some preferable object to my poor boy; if either be the case, I shall have reason to wish he had never seen you." Poor Miss Elliot felt a severe pang, but so strong was her apprehensions of offending her father and mother, by betraying any favourable sentiments for this young gentleman, that affecting not to have observed Mr. Spranger's expressions, she took up her work very composedly, which seemed to engage her whole attention. The old gentleman, nettled to a degree at the bare suspicion of his boy's being disregarded by her, said, with some warmth, "I must take the liberty of telling you, Miss, that Frank does not deserve this neglect, for if ever an heart was truly devoted to any woman upon earth, his is to you, as too evidently appears by his present condition." Miss Elliot's spirits were naturally delicate, and this rebuke, added to the constraint she had already laid upon herself, was too much for her, and to the great surprize of every one present, she instantly fainted away. Mr. Spranger was in the utmost consternation and concern at this accident, and could only repeat several times, who could have expected this? good God! who could have expected this? The lady soon recovered, and begged to be permitted to retire, but Mr. Spranger insisted upon it, their schemes should be kept no longer secret; accordingly, at his request, every circumstance was revealed, except the twenty thousand pounds; the reason the old gentleman assign'd for this concealment afterwards was, that a good wife, and such he was persuaded Miss Charlotte would prove, could not forbear communicating all she knew to her husband. Miss Elliot was extremely astonished at their proceedings, and thought it a little hard that such a trap should have been laid for her, but the encomiums they all bestowed upon her duty and prudence, lessened her mortification. "Now," said

said Mr. Spranger, that I have had my humour out, the pretty dears, tapping Miss Charlotte's cheek, shall not be any more teased, but have the liberty of saying all the tender things imaginable to each other without let or molestation; I'll assure you, continued he, addressing the young lady, the old man was piqued at your seeming insensibility. But I fancy you have no objection now papa and mama approve it, to receiving Frank's visits." I confess, sir, said Miss Elliot, the gentleman has some share in my good opinion, but whether that was, or was not the case, I hope I never should prove disobedient to my papa and mama's commands." "We are satisfied, returned Mr. Spranger, that you are a good girl, but is it not an agreeable circumstance, when duty and inclination go hand in hand; I don't mean to distress you, added he, perceiving she was at a loss for a reply, it is only your lover that has a right to be informed in this particular. I had best hasten home and set the poor lad's heart at rest, and am thankful, continued he, addressing Mr. and Mrs. Elliot, that my time of day for these things is over; for as one cannot forbear smiling at youth, when caught in the blind deity's snare: old age, under the affectation of such soft entanglements, must be absolutely ridiculous: good by to you all; what glad tidings I shall bear to *your* love," whisper'd he, as he stepped into the coach, his heart overflowing with generous satisfaction; now, said he, as he returned, who can say I have lived in vain? that common reflection upon old bachelors; I have been the instrument of happiness to two worthy young creatures, and intentionally never gave pain to any one. This last action I shall ever contragulate myself for, and shall henceforth, as they shall experience in due time, consider them as my own children. Mr. Clive was ignorant of this visit, and had received in his friend's

friend's absence a letter from his sister, containing the pleasing information of her ticket's being come up two thousand pounds, one of which she pressed him with great earnestness to accept of; this account had raised his spirits exceedingly; and as such an appearance was unexpected by Mr. Spranger, it, in some measure, abated the pleasure he had promised himself in being the messenger of good news.

"Sir, said the generous youth, so soon as he entered the parlour, I have just received a piece of intelligence, that has made me extremely happy; these few lines, if you will take the trouble of perusing them, will inform you of the cause." Mr. Spranger examined them with an impatient curiosity, for he was half offended by his disappointment; but clearing up immediately, he returned the letter, saying, "I am too hasty, Frank, I confess in my judgment, but beg your pardon for only injuring you in thought. The pleasure you feel upon this occasion, is noble, is laudable and I highly approve you for it; you know the old saying, continued he, that one misfortune seldom comes alone; it is reversed with respect to you. I have been over this morning to Mr. Elliot's, in order to bring the business of your heart to a conclusion, and was returned brimful of successful intelligence. I cannot say, but I was a little hurt, to find your disposition so changed, as your countenance visibly denoted, previous to my information. I was within an ace of bringing my schemes to an ugly catastrophe, in too curiously prying into inclinations and sentiments; I blundered about you, until poor Charlotte made an ample discovery of her affection for you by fainting away." "Good God! interrupted Mr. Clive, I hope the lady is"—"Very well I assure you, returned Mr. Spranger, and with the united consent of herself and family, very much at your service." Mr. Clive made many handsome acknowledgments

ledgments for the kind concern Mr. Spranger took in his affairs, and added, I may now, sir, flatter myself with obtaining by your generous means, what is a thousand times more valuable to me than any other blessing of life, or even life itself." Mr. Spranger then enquired, if there were no letters for him. Mr. Clive replied, there was one from Bath, and begged pardon for his remissness in not delivering it sooner. "I can easily excuse you, returned the honest gentleman, you have only acted a natural part, and I prefer natural to artificial dealing in every respect." He then read his lordship's epistle, which mentioned his intention of visiting Spranger-Hall in three days, and desiring him to inform his favourite, that he had but six weeks longer to continue in England. This was a thunder clap to Mr. Clive, but Mr. Spranger saw it in a different light; "Six weeks, he said, was a sufficient time for Miss Elliot and him to come to a right understanding, and then the pleasure of corresponding would allay the pain of absence." Observing some tokens of dejection in Mr. Clive's looks, "why, continued he, surely, it is early enough three years hence for you to be dubbed Benedict; you could not expect to carry off the lady upon so short an acquaintance; no, no, added he, you neither of you know your own minds at present, and, with my consent, no marrying in haste, you know what the poet says is the result. A few years will confirm your esteem, and esteem is the ground-work of happiness; for as for this first passion, called love, it is but a flight, a vapour, very well for boys and girls to flutter with a little while, but is no security for either felicity or permanent affection. Five and twenty is, with youth, the first judicious period; all before is romantic and superficial." How little so ever Mr. Clive might relish this doctrine, he was obliged to receive it as orthodox,

orthodox, he knew it would be in vain to remonstrate and therefore wisely resolved to reconcile himself to the humour of his friend without a murmur. My lord's return was to him a very unpleasing circumstance, as he knew his presence must inevitably lay him under some restraint; but as he could not reasonably expect an exemption from every mortification, he blamed himself for suffering such light evils to affect him: he had the pleasure of seeing and conversing with Miss Elliot in that ample manner Mr. Spranger had promised him, and met with the utmost, modest encouragement his heart could wish.

At length, my lord arrived, and on Mr. Clive's saluting him with a respectful bow, he affected not to have the least knowledge of him. "Why, brother, cried the open-hearted Mr. Spranger, you can't have forgot your secretary." My lord made a slight apology and added, I have seen such a multiplicity of faces, since I left Spranger-Hall, that it is impossible I should retain a remembrance of any other than those I am perfectly acquainted with. Mr. Spranger longed to communicate his late proceeding to my lord; for such was his disposition, as to receive an additional satisfaction, from imparting whatever gave him pleasure; accordingly, as soon as the bustle of my lord's trunks and retinue began to subside, "I have some news for you, brother, said he, my Frank, is in a fair way of becoming a very near relation of our good friend Mr. Elliot." "The devil! retorted his lordship, with great vehemence; Elliot can never be so infatuated as to bestow twelve thousand pounds, and such a lovely girl, upon a beggar." "My lord! replied the astonished and mortified Mr. Spranger, Mr. Clive was not born to beggarly expectations, and, notwithstanding he has been reduced by the unhappy conduct of his relations to some difficulties, he has,
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nevertheless, a friend that can make him an equal match for Miss Elliot." "I understand you, brother, replied the heated peer, I read his insinuating nature in his placid countenance, and made no doubt of his imposing upon you, if he had an opportunity." This reflection upon Mr. Spranger's sagacity, a talent he peculiarly valued himself upon, stung him to the quick; "You are rude, my lord, returned he, and forget you are affronting me in my own house." Mr. Clive was in a most unhappy situation to find himself the cause of dissention between these friends, and, with a modest confusion, intreated Mr. Spranger to sacrifice him to appease his lordship. "No, replied the honest man, I would not forego my attachment to you, my boy, to gratify the caprice and ill-nature of the whole house of peers; I have not lived till this time of day to submit to be dictated to, who and who are proper objects of my esteem; that is a particular, in which I am indeed not easily imposed upon, however weak I may be in other respects," darting a look of resentment at his lordship. "I wonder, said the peer, with great complacency and composure, that you should suffer your passion to transport you to such lengths; shall a friendship of five and twenty years continuance be interrupted by a sudden attachment to a young fellow born within that period; I confess, I have been too warm, but my astonishment, nay, I may add, my disappointment, at what you related (as I am commissioned to propose a noble alliance for that lady) occasioned it. If I offended you by it, I beg your pardon." Mr. Spranger, without taking notice of his lordship's concessions, replied, "but we have been too quick for this limb of nobility, let him be whom soever he may; and I am confident, not even your lordship, were you to propose yourself, with all your honourable appointments and fortune, would be
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able to rival my Frank, in either the young lady's affection, or her father and mother's approbation."

"We shall have a trial of skill, brother, returned the peer, I'll assure you, notwithstanding your confidence." "You may try your utmost, replied Mr. Spranger coldly, but Frank and I have put a spoke in your wheel, which you will not easily remove."

It seems his lordship had long admired this lady, and had entertained some dishonourable designs upon her, which Miss Elliot's prudence had always prevented his having an opportunity of putting in execution; but now that there was a probability of his hopes being for ever blasted, he was almost frantic; and, in his first transport, had resolved to change his purpose, and make an honourable tender of his heart; but, upon cooler consideration, he shifted about intirely, as will appear in due time. Mr. Spranger took two or three turns in the garden, in order to compose himself, but in vain, he could not digest his lordship's treatment of him, and determined to make his will directly, and leave all his fortune, together with the five and thirty thousand pounds his sister's death intitled him to, from my lord, to his insulted favourite. Mr. Clive retired to his chamber, full of the most disagreeable reflections; ah! said he, how much did I apprehend this nobleman's return, though I knew not for what reason; how foreign were the misfortunes his arrival has brought upon me from my expectations; I am now plunged deeper than ever, all my flattering prospects shut in, and the loss of my much loved Charlotte will, I fear, be the winding up of my perplexed and unfortunate destiny. He had not continued long in this disconsolate situation, before a servant came to inform him Mr. Spranger enquired for him; he went down immediately, and met his worthy friend in the hall, who said to him,
"Frank,

“ Frank, I have ordered the chariot to carry you to tea at Mr. Elliot’s; make my respects, and let them know I shall take a bit of supper with them; but, whispered he, not a word of what has past, be chearful as usual, for I promise you, you have nothing to apprehend.” This was a seasonable consolation to the half credulous Mr. Clive, who, without any reply, but a low bow, stepped into the chariot, and drove off. Mr. Spranger had not so far overcome his resentment as to return to my lord, but holding his honest head more erect than usual, stalked into his study, and taking up a book, said he, this haughty peer shall seek me, for I am not the aggressor. My lord, during this interval, had leisure to weigh every circumstance with due deliberation; the result of which was, that he promised himself to convert this seeming evil into a substantial good. Miss Elliot in her virgin state, her heart replete with the pious instructions of her good mother, and under the immediate wing of both her parents, might prove invincible, but Mrs. Clive in the bloom of nineteen, just entering the beau monde, surrounded with splendor and flattery, and having the sanction of an easy husband, might be deluded into the flowery path of gallantry, with safety and reputation to herself, and security for her happy gallant, from the outcry and prosecution of her honest relations, or the censure of the world. He resolved, therefore, from these considerations to tack about, and promote their union with as much warmth as he had before opposed it. With this resolution he rung the bell, and with a friendly accent enquired where his brother was; on being informed, in his study, he instantly went to him, and holding out his hand, accosted him in the smooth language of deceit. “ Can you, my brother, said he, forgive my late violence of temper? I fear I was guilty of great absurdity and ill-manners, but I
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sincerely ask your pardon, and once more solicit to be reinstated in your cordial esteem and friendship, and to convince you of my sincerity, Mr. Clive shall reap every advantage from my countenance and favour, either you or he can wish or desire ; nay, farther, I give up the cause I had undertaken, fully sensible Miss Elliot could not be so happily, though more honourably, disposed of." Mr. Spranger's attention was engaged by the conclusion of his lordship's speech, and taking him by the hand ; " why now, said he, you are again my brother ; I myself am quick, but let all be forgotten." " The peer ever eloquent, and versed in dissimulation, said, they had both acted an hot headed part, and the poor young gentleman had been the sufferer ; for, continued his lordship, he has too nice a sensibility, not to have been hurt by my ill-judged invectives ; but (again shaking the hand of the unsuspecting Mr. Spranger, who knew but little of court promises and sincerity) added he, we will make him amends."

Coffee was ordered, and their mutual good humour reassumed, but how various were their motives. Mr. Spranger's heart felt and flowed from the consciousness of well-doing, and well meriting ; the peer's from self-love, and deep, malevolent designs. " We will both go over, said Mr. Spranger, if you approve it, brother, and sup with our friend ; I have engaged myself by a message I ordered Frank to deliver." My lord acquiesced, and the coach was immediately got ready. Mr. Clive had not been able to shake off his chagrin so far, but that this good family perceived it, and, as he was not at liberty to give the true reason, he found himself under the necessity of feigning a slight indisposition ; Miss Charlotte gently rebuked him for coming out, lest he should increase his disorder, and discovered a tender solicitude concerning him,

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which would have given him the highest satisfaction, had he not remembered it was painful to her. Mr. and Mrs. Elliot said many obliging things, but my lord's behaviour perpetually occurred to his imagination, and interrupted the happiness he would otherwise have enjoyed. He was glad to hear the coach stop, as his friend's arrival he hoped would enliven them all, a seriousness on his account having prevailed in every heart. My lord's unexpected voice filled him with unspeakable apprehensions, which were so strongly depicted in his countenance, that Miss Elliot caught the alarm, and began to fear some impending calamity for either her, or her lover, which was exactly the same thing. Mr. Spranger, in order to relieve his favourite from the pain he was certain he must feel, stepped to him, whilst my lord and Mr. Elliot were exchanging congees, and whispered, "all is well, Frank, and, my lord, is more your friend than ever." The good effect of this intimation was instantaneous, and Mr. Clive's indisposition vanished, as at the voice of a magician. When his lordship had honourably acquitted himself with respect to the complimentary part of his character, he advanced with great politeness to Mr. Clive, and bowing very low, said, "I hope, sir, you can forgive my ungenteel behaviour." Mr. Clive returned a very respectful reply. All animosities were thus overblown, and they passed a very agreeable evening. Mr. Spranger took an opportunity to mention to Mrs. Elliot, that my lord was highly pleased with their proceeding, and had repeated his promise of making Frank's fortune.

The next morning, at breakfast, the peer asked, when the happy day was to be; for he supposed, as the time of their departure grew so near, it was of consequence already fixed. Mr. Spranger replied, you out-run us, brother, in your expectations, they
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are both too young to change their conditions, and we therefore think to postpone the ceremony for three years to come. Three years, returned the astonished nobleman, three ages would not appear less tedious; you are treating them as if they had as far to look forward as the antediluvians. A girl of eighteen, and a young man of two and twenty in our days, brothers, are no chickens: it is apparent, that you are past the meridian of your life, or you would not think of tantalizing creatures in this manner; it is just as if you were to shew your hoards to a poor man, and then deny him a single shilling to relieve his necessities. Believe me, brother, added he, nothing preserves youth from indecorum so effectually as being married judiciously before their minds are warped by vice and bad company. Mr. Clive now felt new palpitations, my lord was in an instant perfectly restored to his good graces. Mr. Spranger rubbed his head, and, after some little hesitation, returned, I don't know, my lord, but you may be very right, yet, I fear, it will be now impracticable. "By no means, replied his lordship, the young folks are well acquainted with each other's sentiments, I'll answer for them already; and as for a few bridal preparations, they are no sooner set about than dispatched; let you and I with united force accelerate this matter, and take my word for it, half a dozen years hence we shall applaud ourselves for it." Mr. Spranger was easily brought over by obliging means, especially, when he had a good purpose to promote; it was therefore concluded that they should immediately gain Mr. Elliot to their party, and considering the wife as merely a passive being, they depended upon her acquiescence of course. They had no sooner taken this resolution, than Mr. Elliot dropped in upon them unexpectedly and Mr. Clive instinctively withdrew; they attacked him with such

irresistible arguments, that he yielded the point, and it was agreed that the ceremony should be performed as soon as possible. Mr. Spranger then mentioned Miss Clive as a very pretty companion for her intended sister, and added, Frank proposed taking her over with him; but had been persuaded to the contrary by him; if you think proper, sir, continued he, when Mrs. Elliot is acquainted with our intentions, we will send for her; Mr. Elliot was vastly pleased with this proposal, and said it would be much better than Charlotte's going alone; he then took his leave, and they appointed to meet again in the afternoon. My lord seeing Mr. Clive soon after, "Well, sir, said he, am I not very industrious to make you amends for the mortification I occasioned you? Mr. Elliot has consented to your happiness, and we do no apprehend any other obstacles." Mr. Clive was all acknowledgment for the great service my lord had done him, and his lordship congratulated himself on his own good success. Mrs. Elliot was not at all averse to disposing of her daughter, as she looked upon her, notwithstanding her early time of life, to be as prudent, steady and experienced, as many others at a more advanced age, and approved vastly of her having a companion of her own sex in a strange country. Miss Charlotte was immediately called, and informed by her good mama of these hasty proceedings; she had no other objections, than a few delicacies, which would have been equally troublesome at the expiration of three years, as at that juncture. Preparations were instantly made for this early event, and Miss Clive received a summons, which was highly agreeable to her inclination; she was naturally a girl of great vivacity, and panted after the gay scenes of life, from which she had hitherto been totally excluded. She now thought
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her day of enlargement was at hand, and quitted her old aunt and Gloucestershire with all the pleasure imaginable. She was genteel and pretty, but not in any remarkable degree; her disposition was excellent, her sprightliness rather unbounded but perfectly innocent. She soon arrived at Spranger-Hall, and Frank introduced her to his good friend, and my lord, who both received her with great politeness. She was immediately conducted to Mr. Elliot's, where she was to continue during their stay in England, and was generally allowed to be a very eligible companion for her sister elect. She was in reality mistress of several pleasing accomplishments, had a fine voice, played on the harpsichord with great judgment and with uncommon propriety of accent, danced to perfection, and was lively and engaging in her conversation. My lord bestowed many commendations upon her, and, when Miss Elliot was absent, thought her the most agreeable girl he had ever seen; these ladies charms were as opposite as light and darkness, none could behold Miss Clive without being caught at once; Miss Elliot stole upon you by degrees, but always made the most lasting impression, as judgment was for her, and only fancy for Miss Clive.

Mr. Clive found himself some inches taller than usual, and seemed to breathe a freer air. The day was fixed for their union, and preceded one fortnight the day of their departure. Miss Clive was bridemaids, the youthful peer brideman; Mr. Elliot himself bestowed his daughter upon the happy Mr. Clive, and every countenance was illumined with pleasure and satisfaction; my lord felt two or three stings of baleful envy, but consoled himself with the reflection, that he was paving the way to his own happiness. Mr. Spranger made them a magnificent present, and plum-

ed himself not a little upon the being the author of so much felicity. They enjoyed a fortnight's sun-shine, which the parting cloud alone interrupted for some little time. They had a very pleasant journey to Park-gate, where the yacht was commanded for his excellency's convoy. They embarked in good spirits, and with a prosperous gale, but were obliged to come to an anchor to wait the reflux of the tide. Their days were not all to be halcyon ones, for suddenly, whilst they were in this situation a dreadful storm overtook them, and for six hours the gaping ocean seemed ready to devour them. A ship that set out in company with theirs, not being so well manned, nor in such good repair, perished before their eyes. Nothing was to be seen on board but distraction, no prospect around but inevitable destruction. The peer's was not a Roman soul, consequently might be allowed to shake. Miss Clive shed abundance of tears, her brother held his beloved wife in his arms, and hoped to retain his hold even in the agonies of death. One tear involuntarily stole down the cheek of the lovely bride: "alas! said she, our sufferings, will be but momentary, but I fear my dear father and mother will not so easily surmount theirs. How unfit are we, continued this amiable woman, under this general confusion and consternation, to make the least preparation for so awful a change, with which we are now threatned; this scene is an unanswerable argument that we ought always to be in readiness." Mr. Clive perfectly raved, called himself the cause of her untimely fate, and declared perishing alone would have been happiness, to what he felt on her account. "My dear, said she, with an angelic sweetness, you forget, that we are at most, but second causes of events. It is the hand of providence, that has brought this to pass, and that hand is still
powerful

powerful enough to snatch us from the destruction, that now stares us in the face. How different are your sentiments and mine on this occasion, you are the only man I ever wished to live with, and dying with you, I prefer, if it is the will of heaven, to existence without you: the pangs I feel are for my father and mother, but I hope they will be enabled to bear my loss with a proper resignation. Thus did they pass the melancholy hours, stunned with the complicated noise of winds and waves, cries of women and children, and the clamour of the ship's crew. At length, contrary to the expectations of the most experienced sailor, the storm abated, and they once, once more came to an anchor. Their terrors proportionably subsided, as their danger decreased, and at last the peer opened that mouth which fear had long kept shut, and declared, he had ever been of opinion that that they should escape: no one presumed to question his Excellency's sagacity. In four hours more they found themselves in the main ocean, and glided smoothly on, without the least alarm, until they entered the bay of Dublin: the prospect now was most delightful, the sun shone gloriously, and beautified the hills and plains, by which that harbour is surrounded. They here parted company, my Lord entering the state barge, and they a private wherry, which landed them safe on George's quay. They were met on the beach by a friend of Mr. Clive's, who had, at his previous request, engaged a lodging for them on College Green, to which he conducted them. The ladies were vastly fatigued with their passage, and, after taking some little refreshment, retired to their respective apartments, in order to find, in repose, a remedy for their disordered heads. Mr. Clive chatted a few hours with his friend.

The next morning he waited upon his excellency, and met with a very gracious reception. Clive, said his lordship, I hope your wife and sister will not make themselves strangers at the palace, at least on public days; for you are to know I shall take a pride in convincing these people that beauty is not alone the growth of their country. Mr. Clive engaged for their frequent appearance, and the peer privately sneered at the intended wital's eagerness to swallow the barbed hook he was preparing. Mrs. Clive had soon a very genteel acquaintance, and was much admired by the Irish gentlemen. Miss Clive was not over-looked, but her smartness kept them in awe. My lord condescended to lay aside his state, and made them many friendly visits, but behaved in such a manner, as not to give them the least suspicion of his base designs. His scheme was to engage their confidence and good opinion, and depend upon some lucky moment for the rest. Things were in this situation, when a vacancy happened of five hundred pounds a year in his lordship's gift. The applications for it were innumerable, but Mr. Clive's modesty would not permit him to be of the number. However going to the palace whilst it was in agitation; "Clive, said his lordship, you cannot be ignorant of the vacancy now in my power; how comes it then, authorised as you are by my brother's favour, and my reiterated promise, that I have not one solicitation on your behalf, I believe the whole kingdom besides have solicited. My lord, replied the modest Mr. Clive, I understood that my dependance was merely upon your lordship's pleasure and generosity, and doubted not but I should be remembered, when ever any thing happened, you should think me worthy of. "Clive, Clive returned his excellency, I find you are not

you have too much

diffidence and modesty about you; with any other man than myself they would prove impediments, but I admire modesty. However I will punish you to teach you for the future, that a patron expects to be sought and solicited: I therefore desire I may bestow this place, not upon Mr. but Mrs. Clive, and let me have a visit from her accordingly." The husband communicated his lordship's conversation to his wife, who not liking the man, she did not relish his proposal; but as the advantage of her Frank was at stake, she determined to comply with this strange humour. Miss Clive rallied her extremely upon her unwillingness to go and ask a favour, she was assured would be granted. Mrs. Clive's spirits were too much depressed to be diverted with all she could say: a chair was called, and into it this lovely woman put herself, and ordered the men to convey her to the castle, which was performed in a trice.

She was immediately conducted by one of the gentlemen of the bed-chamber, agreeable to his lordship's directions, into an elegant apartment, where his excellency vouchsafed to attend her in a few minutes: "I find, said he, on entering the room, your husband is a man of honour: He promised me the pleasure of your company, and has been punctual in the performance." My lord, replied the amiable lady, it is indeed at my husband's request, that I now presume to wait upon you, and he likewise informed me that your lordship had been so generous as to indirectly flatter him, that you intended bestowing an advantageous post upon him, but required my attendance to receive a confirmation." "He mentioned no conditions then. returned his lordship, with a mysterious air?" "None, my lord, replied the unsuspecting lady." "Nor you cannot guess, retorted the peer." My lord, replied Mrs. Clive,

I must beg you will do me the honour to explain yourself, for at present I really do not comprehend you." "This, said my lord, it is to make an heavy husband the messenger of love. Did he he not tell you, madam, how long I have sighed in secret for your favour? how earnestly I solicit it, and that he himself had consented to my happiness in lieu of extensive favours in my power to bestow?" Mrs. Clive was so astonished at the consummate villany of the peer, in endeavouring to persuade her that her husband had consented to act the pander with his own wife, that for some moments she was deprived of all power of utterance; at last recovering herself, "my lord, said she, cannot surely expect so palpable an imposition to pass current with me, simple as I am. I am too well acquainted with my husband's honour, affection, and delicacy, to believe him capable of such an action; we are not yet in such abject circumstances, sir, as to submit to such base purposes for a maintenance. Twelve thousand pounds is a competency for him and me, without your lordship's boasted favour, if it is to be purchased at such a price." "Lovely Mrs. Clive, returned his excellency; how this pride becomes you, but you must be kind. I have admired you from your infancy, and watched your growing beauty with delight; then attempting seize one of her hands, he added, suffer me not longer to languish on your account." "My lord, said Mrs. Clive, retreating to some distance, I thank you in my husband's name, for thus requiting his confidence in your honour; we will quit this kingdom immediately, nor will I ever again behold the man who could treat me with such indignity." My lord clapped himself between her and the door: "Mrs. Clive, said he, with an austerity of voice and aspect, that made her tremble, we must not part thus: I have gone
too

too far to recede, nor shall you live to expose me; therefore you must either leave this beloved husband in a state of joyless separation, or yield to the intreaties of a man unaccustomed to sue in vain for ladies favours." "I was not made to tremble at your lordship's menaces, replied Mrs. Clive with great firmness, nor to be softened by your condescension, if you are so savage in your nature, and abandoned to all sense of guilt and humanity, as to murder the innocent; do it, my lord, without a moment's hesitation, you shall not find me shrink. I that could undismayed behold the horrors of the deep, can see a pointed sword without a shock: but remember I have friends, though untitled, that will call you to a strict account."

"Know I despise them all, returned his lordship, then softening his brow, yet, madam, I am your faithful, tender lover, pliant to your will; my heart is in your hand; mould it as you please." "I fear, replied the indignant lady, it is too callous, but I will make one attempt, set me at liberty my lord, and I will endeavour to forget this insult, and believe you have still some little generosity." My lord finding her so steady in her resolution, and calm in her resentment, began to despair of gaining his point, and at this juncture violence was not altogether convenient, so putting on an hypocritical smile; "Can you, said he, most amiable of women, pardon the pain I have given you? Your husband shall to morrow be put in possession of the appointment I promised him, and may depend upon my future favour. You must not be so cruel, as to consider this frolick in a severe light, nor treat me differently than you have been accustomed, promise me this, and will not longer detain you." "All that I can do, consistent with my honour, to oblige your lordship, returned Mrs. Clive, I will: this is the utmost compliance you ought

to expect from one so grossly injured and affronted." My lord immediately released his frightened prisoner, and commanding one of the gentlemen in waiting to conduct the lady to her chair, said aloud, "Mr. Clive's patent shall be made out with all expedition, and I shall expect to see him at the castle to-morrow morning.

Mr. Clive happened to be from home at his wife's return, which she considered as a fortunate circumstance. "Charlotte, said she, I have been basely treated by that noble villain, our pretended patron, and how to act with respect to your brother I know not, but he shall never receive a favour from the unworthy man: I would not shew him so much countenance for the universe. She then related the particulars already mentioned to her astonished sister, who, from her little knowledge of the world, concluded there could not be such another monster in it. Mrs. Clive then acquainted her with her intention of writing immediately to her mama, to inform her of this horrid and unexpected adventure, and referring her future conduct to her regulation; this being approved by Miss Charlotte, Mrs. Clive wrote as follows.

"Honoured madam,

Your daughter, notwithstanding her present state and distance from you, never had such great occasion for your judicious advice and instructions as at the present juncture. How shall I relate, or you, without the utmost horror and resentment, be informed, that your Charlotte has received the grossest insult and indignity imaginable, from that very peer, who engaged himself, by all the ties of honour, to protect her, and promote her husband's interest. He, it's true, has offered an appointment of five hundred pounds a year, but his wife's virtue was to be the purchase; can you,
dear

dear madam, or my dear papa, consent that we should receive favours from such an unworthy being; I think I know you better, therefore shall find some pretext to decline the acceptance of the base offer, until I receive your determination. My dear Frank is ignorant at present of this vile attempt; how long I shall be able to keep him so God knows, yet tremble at the thoughts of revealing it. My lord intreated me to forget this frolic, as he called it, and expects this place will effectually silence me, but I am weary of this wicked, high, public life, and think, if my Frank was to embark part of my fortune in the profession he was brought up to, as he is generally esteemed, it would be equally advantageous; but this I submit intirely, as I do every other step in my present disagreeable situation to your better judgment.

I am with all duty and affection,
my honoured Mother's,

CHARLOTTE CLIVE."

Mr. Clive returned to dinner, and enquired of his lady concerning her reception and success: "my dear, replied this tender wife, I believe we are all deceived in this great man, but I must intreat you to comply with the first request I ever made to you of any consequence. I have wrote to England my opinion of his lordship, and motives for entertaining so bad a one; and hope you will oblige me so far as neither to go to the castle, nor seek any further into my reason, until I receive an answer; Charlotte is privy to my proceedings, so let us carry on our plot without interruption." Mr. Clive felt himself extreamly hurt by this conversation; he was too well acquainted with the candour of his wife's disposition to suspect her
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of an hasty or malicious judgment: he was apprehensive of the cause, but after such an injunction would not press her further, but waited until she should oblige him with a frank communication; he therefore said, "I submit to your pleasure, my dear, though, I confess, very reluctantly. I believe my lord capable of every baseness, and am prepared for your information, be it whatsoever it may." It was mutually agreed that Mr. Clive should feign a slight indisposition to prevent the busy town from prying into the reason of his absenting himself from the castle. Thus they lived retired for some time, and Mrs. Clive declared she had not known what happiness was in that kingdom, until that period. My lord was mortified at the pride of the whole family, they never separated during the visits he honoured them with, and treated him with unusual distance and respect.

Mr. Spranger happened to dine at Mr. Elliot's the day Mrs. Clive's letter reached them, and so apparent was her good mother's grief and surprise on reading the contents, that the gentlemen insisted upon being made acquainted with the cause.

"I know not, said she, that I am justifiable in betraying this secret to Mr. Spranger; but you, my dear, to her husband, are a party concerned."

"I will not be excluded, said the alarmed and impatient Mr. Spranger, it is my boy and girl as well as yours; keep me not therefore in ignorance of any misfortune that may have befallen them."

"It is a misfortune indeed, replied Mr. Elliot, having read the letter, but I will venture to make you, sir, acquainted with it, if you will promise not to be too violent in your resentment." "It is no misbehaviour of Frank's towards his wife, interrogated the good gentleman, his eyes sparkling with displeasure and expectation; every thing but that, continued he, I can forgive." "Then we are

are safe, replied Mr. Elliot; read, sir, the astonishing news," giving him the letter. "D—n his lordship, exclaimed the good man, with a violent stamp of his foot, so soon as he had perused only part of the letter; they receive a favour from him! no, I had rather see them perish, as well as I love them. What! at this late hour, when time has begun to throw up furrows on his cheek, shall he have debauching his friend's daughter in his head; the man that became husband to my poor deceased sister, years before this good girl was born; intolerable, unprecedented wickedness! But I have him in my power, continued he, that is one happiness, and he shall immediately refund the forfeited moiety of my sister's fortune, which I will bestow upon these young people to make them amends for their journey and disappointment." After he had for some time vented his resentment, he consulted with his good friends concerning the measures he should pursue, and it was determined, that he should take no other notice of his lordship's villany, than by employing his attorney to write him a letter, requiring him to pay into the hands of the solicitor-general the five and thirty thousand pounds Mr. Spranger was intitled to, with the one and twenty years interest due upon it, within six months ensuing the date thereof, or he should be proceeded against in a different manner. This was instantly performed, and Mrs. Elliot wrote to her daughter, highly approving her conduct, and desiring that they would decline all farther connexion with my lord, without assigning either to him or the world their reasons for such a procedure; that their friends thought so far from there being a necessity for their flying Ireland, that it would have a much better appearance for them to continue there some time, and prevent impertinent conjectures.

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My lord was struck all of an heap by the attorney's letter, and concluding he was blown, cursed his perverse stars for admiring a little obstinate girl, whose education alone was the bar to his success. He hoped he should be able to reinstate himself in Mr. Spranger's good opinion by the representation he could give of this affair, blamed his own remissness in never having taken that advantage of Spranger's generosity, he had had so many favourable opportunities of doing, and by that means secure himself from this severe blow, but as it had fallen upon him, he determined to employ all the artifice he was master of to lessen the weight of it; for which purpose he dedicated one whole morning to write an epistle to Mr. Spranger, in which, with the utmost wit and address, he endeavoured to insinuate, that what had passed between Mrs. Clive and him was merely a frolic, but that he was apprehensive her strict education and retired life might occasion her to consider it in a different light, nor should he be surprized, if her outrageous virtue drew upon him the resentment of all her relations, as it was only time and a knowledge of life that could undeceive her, and concluded with saying, that he should be glad to be favoured with her account of the matter. This letter he antedated, as if written immediately upon the commission of this pretty piece of gallantry. It had not however the desired effect, but rather contributed to aggravate Mr. Spanger's detestation of him; and so soon as he had communicated the contents to Mr. and Mrs. Elliot, he enclosed this curious epistle in a blank piece of paper and returned it to the peer, who was sufficiently mortified at this treatment.

About this time Mr. Frank Clive, the merchant, returned from abroad. On his arrival at Portsmouth he fell into company with a woman
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of admirable personal accomplishments; but the utmost depravity of mind. She was about seven and twenty, and had run through one continued series of vice and irregularity from the age of sixteen, at which period, she was carried off by her own consent from a country boarding-school by a lieutenant of marines. This gentleman brought her to London, and kept her six weeks only, then turned her adrift to want or prostitution. She was not however of a disposition to regret this slight, as she soon met with another keeper, love being too soft a passion for her masculine soul, she nevertheless breathed vengeance against the whole sex in general. Her last friend (as she stiled him) was a captain of a man of war, who discarded her, on discovering that his man John was equally, if not in a greater degree, acceptable to her. She followed him to Portsmouth in hopes of reinstating herself in his good graces, as his circumstances were such as made him desirable to her for a season, but she had the mortification to find on her arrival, that he had sailed from this port a couple of hours. She however continued there, determined to make her journey answer by some means or other, and after bestowing an infinite number of curses both upon the captain and her own perverse stars, she flattered herself with new conquests, the East-India fleet being hourly expected. Mr. Clive's evil genius brought him to the very inn, in which this syren lodged, who soon considered him as worth the pains of entangling, being informed he was a man of considerable property. With this view she made a very genteel as well as modest appearance, affected to be shy and unwilling to be seen by any gentleman in the house; but took an opportunity of enquiring at the bar, if they knew any person who would be glad to take half a post-chaise to London, when she was certain Mr. Clive was within

within hearing: her scheme succeeded, he immediately proposed himself, and, after a few objections, the lady consented to trust herself with him, as there could be no impropriety, she said, in travelling one day with a stranger. This agreement was entered into upon a Friday, and the Monday following was fixed upon for their journey. Mr. Clive said, he hoped the lady would not think him too presuming, but as she had consented to honour him so far, as to accept of him for her fellow traveller, he must intreat she would admit him to her table in the intermediate time, that he might approve himself worthy of her confidence. She pretended to hesitate, but at last complied; as she said he appeared to be too much the gentleman to misconstrue the conduct of a married woman, who, at his request, relaxed some degree of that severity; which in strictness, perhaps she ought to retain. He made a great number number of professions of the high opinion he had conceived of her, and assured her, that so far from diminishing it by her generous condescension, she would infinitely augment it. And so far did his rhetoric prevail, that it was concluded he should dine that very day in her parlour. He congratulated himself upon having gained these two great points and waited impatiently for the dinner hour; he had often observed her, thought her extremely agreeable; but considered her information of her being a married woman, as a mere sham and imposition, as he had much more favourable sentiments of the truly virtuous wife, than to imagine she would even expose herself to so great an appearance of evil, as to entertain a young fellow tete-a-tete in an inn, in the absence of her husband: he resolved however to humour her, in paying her all that distance and respect she seemed to require, until she herself should

should please unsolicited to throw off the mask she had assumed. She on her part exulted not a little that her bait had taken, and bestowed uncommon pains, in the adorning her really handsome person, in order to captivate the (as she fancied) unsuspecting merchant; but his conjectures were before hand with her designs, and they met at dinner with hearts equally replete with schemes, deceit and loose inclinations. The lady topped the part of modesty to the utmost perfection, and the gentleman maintained the greatest propriety and politeness in his behaviour. She however forgot one intended caution, which was to have withdrawn soon after dinner, and drank coffee without the least reluctance. Mr. Clive proposed cards, Mrs. Pinkney immediately gave into it, and challenged him at half guinea picquet. The gentleman lost six games, and the lady continued in the utmost good humour. Supper succeeded this amusement, when her success, in conjunction with the irresistible temptation of a bottle of excellent champagne, soon threw her off her guard; she kept pace with her companion in toasts, sung two or three lively songs, and so insensibly did the hours glide away in her imagination, that the gentleman thought of retiring first, and wishing Mrs. Pinkney a good night, ordered one of the maids to conduct her to her apartment.

In the morning she had the effrontery to send him an invitation to breakfast in her chamber, being, as she said, a little indisposed; he attended her summons, and when the breakfast things were removed, she told him she began to apprehend, that she might suffer in his opinion if she did not account for being alone, and unattended in an inn, particularly at such a disreputable place as Portsmouth. Mr. Clive assured her she might spare herself the trouble of an explanation, as she was in no danger of his doing her the least injustice

tice in his conjectures, and he was far from desiring a lady to reveal any family affairs to him, as he could not but imagine it must cost her some pain. "You are mistaken, sir, said she, it will be a relief to my afflicted mind, to disclose my misfortunes to such a gentleman as you. I am certain, if I read your disposition right, I may depend upon both your confidence and compassion, which will be highly salutary to me under my present circumstances." Mr. Clive only bowed and the lady proceeded. "I was married at sixteen, by the compulsion of my friends to this water savage, called Captain Pinkney, who has treated me ever since the expiration of the first fortnight after our nuptials, not only with coldness and neglect, but the utmost cruelty and brutality; yet, affecting to weep, heaven is my witness, continued she, how affectionate and constant I have been to the vile wretch. He had, sir, ten thousand pounds with me, but God knows how he has disposed of it, for he only allows me a miserable annuity of thirty pounds for my support during his absence, which is often of three years continuance. He is now embarked for Bengal, and will not return in perhaps a longer period. He had the inhumanity to leave me forty pounds in debt, which induced me to follow him to this place, to try if I could not at last soften his rugged nature; but would you believe it, sir, I was so unfortunate, as not to arrive, until two hours after his departure, and as my finances ran low, was obliged to wait for remittances from London, before I could undertake my journey." Mr. Clive artfully condolled with her under her great misfortunes, and inveighed in the severest terms against the author of them. "Why, madam, said he, a lady of
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your beauty and accomplishments ought to command princes, instead of stooping to solicit a narrow-hearted boor, for the trifling sum of forty pounds. I myself would be proud of becoming your banker for treble as much." "O! sir, interrupted the delicate Mrs. Pinkney, I find I am not mistaken with respect to your generosity and humanity, but I only ask your friendship, and hope to surmount all my difficulties without any pecuniary assistance from a gentleman; but, sir, added she, a friend of either sex is highly valuable." Mr. Clive intreated her to banish all remembrance, both of her unworthy husband, and the difficulties which were derived from his unkindness; told her, she might depend upon his best services, and begged she would not suffer her delicacy to prove an impediment to extricating herself from the disagreeable circumstances she laboured under, as her husband was answerable for every step his cruelty might drive her to, in the least inconsistent with that decorum she wished to observe. He then took his leave, saying he should expect the pleasure of seeing her at dinner." She arose soon after, and set Mr. Clive down for her future prey, generously resolving to make the most of him.

They spent the Saturday and Sunday, preceding their departure in the utmost amity and cheerfulness. Her gallant did not take those advantages of her kindness, it was apparent he might have done without offence, as he had some acquaintance in the town, to whose raillery he was unwilling to expose himself. On Monday morning the chaise, being ready at the appointed hour, they began their journey with great alacrity, and proceeded without accident to Godalmin, where Mrs. Pinkney disconcerted her 'squire not a little, by affecting to be seized so extremely ill, after having made an uncommon hearty dinner, as not to be able to proceed
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any farther on her journey. A bed was instantly prepared to which she was conveyed, and continued this deception, until she judged the evening to be too far advanced to attempt another stage. She then dispatched the chamber-maid to Mr. Clive requesting his company to supper, as she found herself surprizingly recovered. He suspected she had some scheme, and was now convinced her disorder was counterfeited: He nevertheless returned a polite message and soon after waited upon her. They had a great deal of trifling chat for some time, but on Mr. Clive's enquiring what part of London Mrs. Pinkney was to be conveyed to, it became more particular. She replied with the most consummate assurance, "as I am under your protection, sir, so I am intirely at your disposal. I discharged my lodging on coming down to Portsmouth, and am quite unprovided, therefore if you can recommend me to one, I shall esteem it as a particular favour." This was an advance the gentleman was by no means prepared for, but that he might not enflame a woman evidently abandoned to every vice, he answered, "upon my honour, madam, I am almost a stranger in my own country, but if you can fix upon one yourself, I will convey you to it with infinite pleasure, and, with your permission, will take frequent opportunities of paying my respects." "Ah! sir, said she, that is a cold compliment, and I must confess to you, that my present indisposition is occasioned by your indifference. My motives for going such lengths in your favour as I have done, must be too evident, and I begin to apprehend that all the affection you have really inspired me with, will meet with no other return than neglect or disgrace. Can you expect, sir, continued she, that I can be so confident, as to engage a lodging in my husband's name, and publicly receive the visits of so agreeable a gentleman

man as you are ; no, there is but one thing that can reconcile me to the happiness of your company."

Mr. Clive not immediately comprehending her, asked an explanation. " Why then, sir, replied the undaunted prostitute, if I must be plain, permit me to engage a lodging in your name, and at least let me claim some relationship to you as a sanction for my reputation. I will go into a part of the town where my person is not known, and can appoint my husband's letters to be left at a particular place, and call for them occasionally, by which means I shall be free from all apprehensions on his account, and must depend upon your honour for the rest."

Mr. Clive was astonished beyond measure at her assurance, and secretly determined to shake her off as soon as possible : she played her cards too grossly to make the least impression on his heart; and, notwithstanding whatever intimacy she might engage him to, he was much more inclined to despise than admire her. He consented however to all she proposed, and gave a bill of twenty pounds for present use, promising to accommodate her with more some few days after their arrival in London. He then earnestly besought her to keep up her spirits, that they might be able to compleat their journey the next day, as he had very urgent business that required his immediate attendance. She promised to do her utmost to oblige him, nor did she wish to continue any longer upon the road, having gained every point her heart was set upon. Next morning as a proof, she said, of her desire to make every thing agreeable to him, she was ready to set off a quarter of an hour sooner than he had requested, and they reached town early in the afternoon. They quitted the post chaise for the more private conveyance of an hackney coach, and drove to a bagnio in that part of the town Mrs. Pinkney chose for her residence. She dispatched a porter for her
assistant

assistant in iniquity, in the humble capacity of her servant, and telling her, she was fallen into noble hands, ordered her immediately to engage her a lodging in the name of Clive, and come to her again in the morning. Her Dorcas, whose simple name was Rachel, obeyed her mistress's commands with the utmost punctuality, and returned the next day at the time appointed. Mr. Clive had just parted from his lady, and she had now an opportunity of informing her trusty confidant of every particular of her proceedings, which the wench extolled to the skies; but was mortified she had not been able to get one glance at her new master. The sham Mrs. Clive took immediate possession of her lodgings, which was not the first time by many she had been accommodated with them. The gentlewoman always giving her a very kind reception in prosperity, though she never could recollect the least knowledge of her, when visited by adverse fortune.

Mrs. Rollinson was invited to dine with her lodger, as Mr. Clive had excused himself, and was entertained with high encomiums on the gentleman's honour and generosity; but as it was customary for this woman to play a sure card, she was purposely detained until his return, and then received an invitation to drink tea with them: she affected to be extremely sensible of the honour done her by the good gentleman and his lady, and said she must take the liberty to say she had not seen so compleat a couple this many a day; but, added she, "sir, notwithstanding your lady has engaged my lodgings, and to be sure her agreement binds you no less than your honour, yet you must give me leave to follow my old customs, then pulling out a bit of paper, this is the kind of method, continued she, I always take, and dare say you will have no objection to conform to it. Mr. Clive took
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the paper, and found the contents to be a formal engagement of her lodgings, at one guinea and a half per week, to be duly paid by him, and a week to be advanced on taking possession. These precautions did not enhance his consideration of the lady in any respect, for he supposed none but an old practitioner would be treated in so extraordinary a manner; however, without appearing surprized or dissatisfied, he complied with the old woman's demands, and all was love and harmony. Notwithstanding the prejudice he had at first conceived against Mrs. Pinkney for her behaviour, he was really beginning to be attached to her, when an accident happened which induced him to break off all connexion with her. She enquired, and found out his real place of residence, and one afternoon when he was in high good humour, she shewed him a letter of her writing, which was far from being a despicable one; she then desired him to make her a pen, and laying a whole quire of paper before him, begged him to try if it would suit her hand. He accordingly wrote several insignificant monosyllables, but was so indiscreet as to write his own name, which she observing, instantly removed the paper, and other implements, to give place to her favourite amusement cards. She had not been many months in keeping with this gentleman, before she began again to have wandering inclinations. Mr. Clive was not so assiduous in his visits, nor so generous in his presents, as she would have had him; she therefore cast her eye upon a young counsellor, that lodged opposite for his successor, or at least copartner. Various were the arts she practised before she could engage his attention, but he was allured into her snare at last. She was so dexterous a manager that Mr. Clive continued ignorant of her new attachment for two months; but coming unexpectedly one evening to make her a visit, he detected

the whole intrigue, upon which he resolved to drop her intirely. Rachel informed her mistress that he behaved in a very cool manner, and said he presumed there was no necessity for his furnishing her with any future supplies, since she had thought fit to provide herself with another lover. Mrs. Pinkney was greatly mortified, and enraged at his indifference: "but Rachel, said she, with much vehemence, he shall supply me still, notwithstanding his wisdom: I have the mean spirited wretch in my power, and so he shall find his indiscretion has given me an handle over him he little dreams of: then stepping to her bureau, she shewed the paper to her confidant, on which Mr. Clive had been so unguarded as to inscribe his name, in such a manner as to be taken advantage of. Rachel, resumed this infamous woman, cannot you procure me some clever fellow, to draw up a draught for five hundred pounds, to be paid at sight for value received; this the hand-maid undertook to accomplish, having at that time a very singular intimacy with an attorney's footman, who from writing in his master's office, having a good memory, and great ingenuity, was able to effect this mischievous design. He was immediately produced and a reward of twenty guineas secured to him, upon his success. He was to carry the draught himself, for which purpose a genteel suit of cloaths was hired at St. Giles's, and the well dressed lacquey waited upon Mr. Clive's partner, and upon presenting the note, in was duly honoured, and the next morning appointed for the payment. This delay was not much relished by the gentleman who pleaded the necessity he was under for dispatch, having but few hours to continue in London. Mr. Sprat, the partner of Mr. Clive, treated him as a gentleman, his appearance being very tolerable, and told him, that if he would intrust him with the draught a few moments, he would

would comply with the contents. He then stept to the bankers, who, on sight of Mr. Clive's hand, paid the money immediately. The first thing Mrs. Pinkney did was to change her lodging, and soon afterwards her evil heart suggested to her a fatal scheme which she too expeditiously and successfully put into execution. Mr. Clive, not returning home till late, did not see Mr. Sprat until the morning, when he presented the draught to his astonished eyes. I acknowledge, sir, said he this is my hand, but am nevertheless positive, it is a fraudulent demand, though I cannot point out either the person or the means that have effected it. I never in my whole life gave any thing of the kind. Mr. Sprat expressed much concern for having caused the money to be paid. But Mr. Clive said he could have done no less, and that it would teach them caution for the future; it was a long while before this mystery was unravelled.

Mr. Clive had during his intimacy with Mrs. Pinkney incautiously mentioned many particulars with respect to his cousin Frank. She had, without the least appearance of design, or indeed, any at that juncture, enquired, what sort of a man he was? how long he had been married? what fortune he possessed, and twenty other questions of the same nature? Mr. Clive, from the real affection he bore his cousin, was always too well pleased, when he was upon the subject, not to be drawn out; so that Madam was perfectly acquainted with the person, character and disposition of this gentleman. "Rachel, said she, a few days after they were got into their new lodgings, I have an admirable project to communicate." She was all attention. "We will take a journey to Ireland, To Ireland, madam, returned Rachel, I dare not venture upon the sea, for the whole world. None of your ridiculous fears, said her mistress, I

shall make our passage, both a safe, and a short one: do you think I would expose myself to so much danger? Well, madam, said the half satisfied wench, what are we to do there?" Make a visit, returned Mrs. Pinkney, to Mr. Clive's cousin. "Dear madam, said Rachel, you really puzzle me." "That may very possibly be, replied Mrs. Pinkney, but the journey we will infallibly take, the rest you shall know in due time, and let it be your business to provide every thing necessary." She spent a whole fortnight in preparations, and expended no small sum in rigging herself. Rachel was then dispatched to Aldersgate-street to engage places in the Chester-coach, but under this particular restriction, not to take them unless some of the passengers were gentlemen: the industrious servant ever punctual in performing her mistress's orders, upon inquiry found that a Colonel, and a welch squire, were to go down the next week, and, from the knowledge she had of Mrs. Pinkney's disposition, did not hesitate to engage a passage in the carriage with them. Upon making her report accordingly, she was highly applauded for her good management. The preceding evening of the day appointed for their journey, they lay at the inn in order to be in readiness. The man of war was loud in his direction, with respect to the disposition of his portmanteau, and the squire gave evident proofs of his consequence and spirit. Madam, and her maid, being informed that the passengers were ready, made their appearance, and Mrs. Pinkney had the pleasure of observing that her figure was not disregarded by the noble commander; she was equipped in a genteel travelling dress, and really looked vastly agreeable. The other two companions were of the humble kind, and consequently were unnoticed by the genteel part of the company.

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The colonel gallantly assisted the lady in ascending the eminence of a stage coach, as he elegantly phrased it, and begged she would chuse that situation that was most agreeable to her. "Upon my soul," continued he, as the coach drove off, Mr. Owen, we had very little reason to flatter ourselves with meeting with so agreeable a lady for a fellow traveller, as a stage coach is but an unweildy and rough conveyance. The squire replied, they were extremely fortunate, and hoped they should have an happy journey; after which declaration he composed himself for a nap, the lady's charms not being sufficiently powerful to keep him awake. Mrs. Pinkney affected to follow the squire's example, and the colonel took that opportunity to ply Mrs. Rachel with a volley of questions relative to her lady. Rachel was prepared for these interrogatories, and declined, for some time, gratifying, in order to excite more strongly the colonel's curiosity. The gentleman persisting in his solicitation, she said in a low voice, she would gladly oblige him, but was fearful of offending her lady, who she apprehended might not be asleep, notwithstanding she had closed her eyes. The colonel assured her upon his honour, she had nothing to fear, as her lady was absolutely subdued by fatigue and early rising. Rachel then yielded to the gentleman's importunity, and being always prompted, told him that her lady was a widow, in possession of a large fortune, in her own disposal, exclusive of her jointure, that she was going to Ireland to visit a relation, as she usually did once in four years; during such absences, she always left her coach at the coach-makers, and condescended to travel in a stage." Colonel Bliffworth was much pleased with this intelligence, and began to flatter himself that he had now an opportunity cast in his way, of repairing his broken fortune. He determined to im-

prove it to the best advantage, was far from having a mean opinion of either his person or address, and entertained no small hopes of success: he waited impatiently for the lady's waking, that he might divert her, and ingratiate himself by relating several drole narratives he was master of.

I hope it will not be thought impertinent to give some account of this warrior; he was it seems of very mean extraction, and enlisted with a recruiting party at twenty to avoid being compelled to marry a young woman he had seduced. The lieutenant, to whose lot he fell, made him his servant, and finding he wrote a good hand, and was a fellow of some small capacity, procured him the first halberd: Thus advanced, ambition (for gratitude it was not) prompted him to distinguish himself by his vigilance and assiduity to oblige his patron, who making an acquaintance at an assembly with a very young lady, a twenty thousand pounder, as he called her: having in due time prevailed upon her to go with him, her papa's consent being deemed unattainable, his serjeant became a very useful person, and his master, for aiding and assisting in this noble work, by way of encouragement and reward, gave him a bond for three hundred pounds, payable upon the day of his marriage with the lady, which was soon after completed; with this sum he purchased a pair of colours in another corps. Upon this unexpected advancement, he strutted, looked big, and stared, and revisiting the place of his nativity, found his sister grown so fine a girl, that he thought he would bring her to town, and did not doubt but she would make her own fortune, and promote his.

His captain, a man of great fortune, loose education, and morals, soon got a sight of this blooming, innocent girl, and her brother perceived he was much taken with her. One evening having supped

supped together at a tavern, Blissworth, said the captain, I think your sister the handsomest girl I ever saw, and was I not under the particular engagements I am, I should have told her so before now." The ensign's ambition received a shock from this unexpected declaration, and he could only reply; "sir, you do my sister great honour." The captain paused a few moments, and then resumed: "I repeat, Blissworth, nothing but a damned entanglement into which I was forced by an obstinate father should have restrained me from giving convincing proofs of my admiration of her; did you never hear, added he, of my misfortune?" "No, upon honour," returned the ensign; "then at once to be ingenuous, said the captain, I was compelled about six years ago, to marry a disagreeable creature, but an immense fortune; we were heartily tired of each other in less than two months, and, at the expiration of half a year, agreed to separate upon some particular terms, and have not met since, nor perhaps ever shall, unless we should both go to the devil. I have now, continued he, convinced you, that notwithstanding I admire your sister to a very great degree, my honour lays me under a restraint never to reveal myself." Mr. Blissworth had listened with great attention, and having weighed some certain considerations in his own breast, returned, this, sir, is a very great misfortune, more especially as it is irremediable; but as I have a singular respect for you, and am much concerned at having been the innocent cause of disturbing your repose, I would strain a point to serve you." "I have heard you prove, sir, most incontestably, that a marriage, where love is wanting, is only a legal prostitution; now if you do my sister all the justice in your power, by securing her from dependance and reflection, I don't see that there would be any

great harm done. She, I doubt not, will have many simple scruples, as she has been bred virtuously, and is ignorant of gallantry; but I will undertake to remove them for your happiness, and to secure your friendship." The captain embraced this unexpected proposal with transport; "I will," said he, make her an handsome settlement, and as for you, Blissworth, added he, you deserve a better fate than being a poor subaltern, if you can hear of a company an easy purchase, you know where to apply." These preliminaries being settled, they enjoyed themselves over a chearful bottle, until they were in such a condition, as to be obliged to be put to bed at the tavern, where to their surprize they found themselves next morning. The ensign hastened home to relieve his sister from the anxiety he knew she would necessarily feel on his account, from the real affection she bore him. His captain promised to breakfast with him, which he accordingly performed. Nancy Blissworth had not been accustomed to much company, therefore was a good deal disconcerted in the captain's presence. He was convinced her modesty and innocence were unaffected, and was delighted with the thoughts of getting her soon into his power; as for the tale of his marriage it was all a base fiction, and only thrown out from a knowledge of the ensign's disposition to extort the vile offer from him already mentioned. Mr. Blissworth, so soon as the captain had taken his leave, questioned his sister concerning her sentiments of him. She acknowledged she thought him the most agreeable gentleman she had ever seen. This favourable declaration was immediately communicated to the enamoured officer, who received it as an earnest of his future happiness.

Mr. Blissworth, chusing to strike whilst the iron was hot, applied the very next day to several persons,

persons, concerning a vacancy in the army, and in one week succeeded, which intelligence was no sooner imparted to Captain Seymour, than he undertook to procure it for him. He then applied to a friend of his in great power, and obtained leave for the ensign to sell his colours, which rendered his new commission an easy purchase: all these matters were soon accomplished, and Mr. Bliffworth was legally dubbed captain. This encouragement proved a spur to his design upon his sister, and he told the captain if he would get the settlement ready, he would soon introduce him upon the footing he desired; this was no sooner proposed than complied with, and the captain promised upon his success to present him with the money received for his ensigncy, and his future interest. Captain Bliffworth said he would break the matter to his sister the next morning, began with telling her how much the captain was charmed with her, and upon his honour he did not believe ever woman was more beloved. Nancy blushed, and was far from being displeased at this information; her brother then launched out into encomiums upon the captain's honour and generosity, and concluded with saying, that he had engaged to prevail upon her to receive him as a lover: the poor girl was quite confounded and said, she should not know what to say to such a gentleman, but her brother encouraged her with the assurance, that the captain would be as well pleased with her silence, as any thing she could possibly say, and desired she would dress herself to the best advantage to receive him; and shew some of her best behaviour. Nancy consented, and away tripped her brother to inform the noble captain of the engagement he had made for him, "but, sir, added he, I must beg you will not alarm my sister with our intention, until you have brought her to

some favourable concessions; for if you do, I fear she will throw us out." The captain's love increased in proportion to the difficulties he expected to meet within seduction, and he assured his friend in iniquity he would treat her with the utmost respect and kindness, nor ruin his schemes by too great precipitation.

The heavy hours were now expired, and poor Nancy's heart went pit-a-pat from innate modesty and timidity. The rap of consequence denoted the captain's arrival, who was conducted into the dining room with great ceremony by Mr. Blissworth, who in a manner, as he thought perfectly gallant, presented his sister to the captain, who saluted her with much respect, and tea was ordered; immediately after which Mr. Blissworth took a French leave, and left the lovers without witness or interruption. The captain changing his seat for one nearer the lady, and taking hold of the young creature's hand, "Madam, said he, may I flatter myself that inclination, and not merely a compliance with your brother's request, has obtained this happiness for me." Nancy made a gentle effort to withdraw her hand, but the captain presumed to detain it; "you must pardon me, continued he, but I love you to distraction, and unless you consent to make me happy, I never again shall have a moment's satisfaction; do, my dearest creature, tell me, I am not disagreeable to you, and that you are not averse upon a due acquaintance, to grant all I can wish." The good girl was so confused she was unable to make any reply. "I hope, said the captain, kissing the hand he held, your silence is not unfavourable to me, and will not press you too far on the first visit; but leave to time, and your better knowledge of me, a confirmation from your lips, but I must endeavour to learn your opinion of me from your brother."

"Alas!

“ Alas ! sir, replied the innocent victim, somewhat recovered, I am so amazed at a gentleman of your rank and fortune, beholding me with such partial eyes, that I am unable to express my sentiments ; you need not be informed that my education has been simple, my manner of life extremely retired ; but my relations, though they cannot boast of riches, are strictly honest, in which principles I have been instructed, if that can atone, for my want of politeness.” “ Charming creature, cried the captain in a kind of extasy, such a mind as yours is inestimable, uncontaminated by vice, unfraught with arts, and rich in genuine innocence and simplicity. I confess myself as much charmed with your goodness as your beauty, and shall think myself happy in becoming your friend and protector. You are very young, added he, Miss Blissworth, I apprehend, but it is not polite to ask a lady’s age.” “ Ladies, sir, may be allowed some odd fancies, but I hope I shall never forget the humble expectation I was born to, nor become unwilling to tell any thing belonging to myself. I am, sir, not quite eighteen.” “ O my love, replied the captain, how will a few years improve your natural good understanding ; you must be introduced to the company of some ladies of my acquaintance, from whose conversation and example you will acquire what we in London call a modest assurance, which amounts to nothing more than being able to converse with a gentleman without blushing, and losing some unnecessary apprehensions, which country people contract, merely from their retirement.” They passed a few hours in this kind of chat, and Nancy attained so much courage as to acknowledge she had no particular objection to the captain before her brother returned, who was commissioned to order a supper at the next tavern, to be sent at half an hour

hour after nine. The captain, from being unacquainted with the real goodness of this poor girl's disposition, flattered himself that a glass or two of wine would infallibly draw her out; but to his great mortification, he could not prevail upon her to drink more than one glass, declaring as she was not used to it, her head would not bear it. Not being able to gain this point, and labouring under no little constraint with respect to his words and actions, he thought proper to take his leave at eleven o'clock, and tipped Bliffworth the wink to meet him at the tavern, which he both understood and punctually obeyed. The captain was extravagant in his praises of this lovely girl, and lamented his inability to place her in such a situation as her merit intitled her to; but confirming his declaration with a desperate oath, said, she should never feel either remorse or suffer shame, if he had the power of preventing it.

Things continued in this situation, for a month; the captain visiting his beloved every day, until he had reason to believe he had made an impression upon her heart, and then resolved to make his grand proposal and boldly acknowledge his pretended marriage. An afternoon was set apart for this purpose, and he had not the least doubt of succeeding; the brother left them by agreement, early to themselves, and the captain, with all the eloquence he was master of, pressed her to fix the day for completing his happiness. The poor girl, after some hesitation, referred to her brother, and the captain then unmasked his intention, but glossed it over in the finest manner imaginable. She was so shocked and astonished, that she did not attempt to interrupt him, which he taking for a good omen, ran through a long description of the happiness she should enjoy, a country-house, a coach and ample settlement were mentioned, and having quite exhausted his subject, he looked at her, expecting her acquiescence:

cence: finding he was silent, she lifted up her eyes, and with the utmost anguish of heart demanded, "does my brother, sir, approve of your generous proposal". The lover gave her many assurances that he did. "I little imagined, returned she, the tears stealing down her lovely cheeks, that George was preparing this fatal dagger for my peace; but, sir, said she rising, I forgive you all, you knew me not, and therefore expected an easy conquest of a poor, artless, inexperienced girl: in vice I do confess I am a novice, but my parents have informed me, in terms adapted to my mean capacity, what virtue is, nor would I forfeit it for millions; you must excuse my staying longer with you, as you have but too well succeeded in obtaining my unfeigned esteem and approbation; this is, sir, my brother's lodgings, therefore, I have no right to proceed any farther than by withdrawing myself to convince you both of your gross error." So saying, she left the captain almost petrified with astonishment, mortification and disappointment. He sat kicking his heels and biting his lips, until Mr. Blissworth's return: so soon as he entered the dining-room, "Blissworth, said the captain, you have deceived me with false expectations, your sister is not to be won, I cannot from her unaffected surprize and concern but suspect you of foul play; what amends can you make me for the wretchedness you have brought upon me? I really have a most tender regard for your sister, and never can know peace without her." His friend laughed at the captain's dolorous countenance, "and can you, sir, said he, be so chagrined by the perverseness of an ignorant girl, who, if once subdued, would thank you for your kindness? you shall have a fair trial this night; if you please, I will convey you into my sister's apartment, and if she is not sensible by morning of the good we intended her, I durst venture

venture to be sacrificed." The captain conceived fresh hopes from this infamous proposal, and determined to put it in execution, considered it as his last stake, and felt much anxiety for the success. They agreed to spend an hour at the tavern in order to raise the captain's spirits, and enable him to persevere with proper resolution.

Poor Nancy Blissworth endured the greatest misery imaginable; "alas, said she, how have I been deluded through flowery paths to this fatal precipice, but God Almighty has saved me from falling, and I will take the first opportunity of flying this cruel lover and base brother." She took a walk out, in order to compose herself, and divert in some small degree her tormenting reflections; how was I brought, she would say, within view of extreme happiness, when like a shadow it has eluded my grasp? the gentlemen returned before her, and the hero was concealed according to agreement, as privately as possible in Nancy's chamber. The unsuspecting maid on her return being informed that her brother was at home, retired immediately, and the captain thought proper to keep his station, until all the family were in bed; at midnight he ventured forth, as gently as he could, but Nancy's mind was too much disturbed to suffer her to sleep, and she was immediately alarmed, and cried out, who is there? the lover was disconcerted, but fearing lest she should raise the family, he replied in a low whisper, "don't be frightened, madam, there is no harm intended you?" What do you want, said she, and who are you? the captain found it was in vain to attempt to impose upon her, and therefore confessed his whole design. "And can you, sir, said the lovely terrified creature, intend me so great an injury, yet assure me you mean no harm? I would gladly not expose myself and you to the family, but be assured, if you advance only one step nearer, no consideration shall restrain me from calling

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ing them all to assist me." He intreated her to hear him a few moments, and protested he would marry her, if she complied, the next morning. "Putting, returned Nancy, your account of a prior engagement, false perhaps as the protestations you are now making, out of the question, I never would consent; if your intentions were honourable, would you have been under the necessity of stealing at midnight like a thief into my chamber? you know too well the easy access you always had to me, whilst I was imposed upon by false pretences; but never, never again can you regain my good opinion." By this time, she had quite dressed herself; it was an extreme dark night, so that they were unable to distinguish each other. "I insist upon it, resumed she, rising, that you stay no longer here, and inform my brother, that his plots upon my virtue will never succeed, nor will I sell myself to gratify his ambition." The captain was so awed by her resolution and real innocence, that he had not the courage to offer the least violence, besides he was well assured his purpose would be defeated by her alarming the family. Miss Bliffworth, said he, I have much to propose to you, will you, if I give you the satisfaction of withdrawing now, receive me tomorrow morning with your usual sweetness." "Tomorrow morning, replied she, you shall have no reason to complain of your reception." Satisfied in some measure with this promise, the captain felt round for the door, and opening it, took himself to the well known chamber of his friend, the appointed rendezvous for the morning. Nancy immediately secured her door, and sat down on the bed, in order to fix upon some scheme to avoid all future persecution from her great enemies. The captain ascended the stairs with much precaution, and obtained an easy admittance from his friend, who was mortified to the last degree at this

little

little perverse toad of a sister as he kindly called her, and swore he would be her match still. The officer passed the remainder of the night in great agitation, and felt in spite of himself that he really esteemed this girl more for her perseverance in virtue than he ever did before for her beauty. Oh! thought he, if she was but intitled to half my fortune, then might I make both her and myself happy with a good grace; but how should I render myself the jest of my acquaintance, were I to suffer my inclinations to get the better of my reason; no, it cannot, must not be: Nancy Blissworth was not born to be wife to Captain Seymour. Nancy racked her imagination for a long time before she could fix upon any probable means of escaping, as she was unacquainted with the town, and had not one person to assist her, in whom she could confide. Her critical situation obliged her to determine to try the goodness of her landlady's heart, but, as they were lodgings of her brother's chusing, she was not without apprehensions of the family's being in his interest; yet, certainly, she said, one female cannot be so abandoned, as not to deliver another from infamy and perdition. I will, however, make the attempt, and shall have day-light to encourage me, and, if I am betrayed, I will cast myself upon the mercy of an hackney coach-man to convey me safe to the Inn where the stage goes from: in this manner she sat till six o'clock, and, upon hearing the maid come down, she ventured out of her room, and desired she would tell her mistress, with as little noise as possible, that she begged to speak with her immediately; the girl delivered this message, and the good-natured woman was not long before she came down, much surprised at Miss Blissworth's wanting her so early: Soon as she saw her disordered countenance, she concluded she was ill, was
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for intreating her to go to bed again, and offered to prepare whatever she pleased to take, and bring it her. Nancy replied with tears, "I accept this mark of tenderness as a favourable mark of the goodness of your disposition, and therefore will venture to tell you, it is in your power to save me from destruction." The good woman was alarmed, and promised her utmost assistance: Nancy then related every particular of this infamous attempt, and intreated her to put her in a way of getting safe to the inn, and she herself could work out the rest. Mrs. Richardson offered herself to attend her, and see her into the stage; Nancy thanked her in the gratefullest terms imaginable, and assured her if she lived, she would make her amends. She then took out of her own portmanteau a little linen gown, her own property, and packing up all the cloaths she had received from her brother, desired Mrs. Richardson to give him the key, which she enclosed in a little note, signifying, that, as the price he had set upon them, rendered them unworthy her acceptance, she had not presumed to take one thing away. Having settled these matters, and taken a dish of coffee, Mrs. Richardson advised her before the maid to go to bed, and she would take the liberty of stepping up to her at her return from Covent Garden market, where she was accustomed to go three times a week.

Under pretence of waiting upon her to her room, she let her out, and promised to overtake her by the time she reached the bottom of the street; this she did not fail to do, and putting themselves into the first coach they met with, reached the inn just in time for the stage. There was but one passenger, besides Nancy, which she was by no means dissatisfied with, and Mrs. Richardson, having seen the coach set off, returned home with much satisfaction. The gentlemen did not rise till ten o'clock, when
 Captain

Captain Bliffworth rung the bell with an air of importance, and ordered the maid to tell Miss Bliffworth he waited breakfast for her. The awkward girl replied, that Miss had had a dish of coffee at six o'clock, and complained of being ill, and her mistress advised her to take some rest; and, perhaps, if his honour pleased, she ought not to be disturbed. Ah! said the captain, with a contracted brow, "if her coffee and sleep will but cure her ill-humours, it will be a good thing." Away went the girl, and the captain called his friend down, telling him, as he entered the dining room, there was no perverse slut to brow beat them. During the breakfast Mr. Bliffworth continued to pour forth invectives upon invectives against his sister, and raising his voice with an intention she should hear him, he vowed she should never have another shilling from him, whilst she was upon these high ropes. He happened accidentally to cast his eye upon a slab, and perceiving a note in his sister's hand, then, for the first time, he gave his beloved scheme up for lost, opened it eagerly, and read with the utmost confusion and mortification the few lines, then throwing it down, he cried out with great vehemence, the jade is eloped. Captain Seymour changed countenance, and taking up the note, "Bliffworth, said he, your sister has a noble mind, I am concerned we have driven her to these extremities, where do you think she can be gone to?" "Only to the devil, replied her tender brother, and I heartily wish he had had her some time ago." Mr. Seymour, notwithstanding his principles were not over nice, was upon this occasion shocked at his companion's brutality. "Bliffworth, said he, more temper, nay, a shew of tenderness would be worthy the heart of so near a relation at this juncture:" "What I say, replied the brother, is purely upon your account; you see the girl has
not

not hurt me in any respect; she has foolishly left her cloaths behind, which I can convert into the ready, and then considering my obligation to you, she wont be much in my debt." "Upon my honour, returned the captain ironically, I am quite of your opinion; The company of Blissworth was now become distasteful to Captain Seymour, and, notwithstanding the part he had acted was chiefly at his instigation and request, yet he absolutely abhorred him for it; where could she be, into what hands she was fallen, and the distresses she might experience, almost distracted him? but, when he reflected, that he could never obtain her favour without shackles and contempt; he, for a moment, endeavoured to banish her from his remembrance, tried the experiment, of the bottle, and a constant succession of company, but in vain. He found, even in his utmost intoxication, she engrossed his whole thoughts, and that there was not upon earth a remedy that could reach his disorder; at length, he determined to sell his commission, and retire to one of his country seats, as in such a retirement he should not have occasion to blush at either her family or simplicity: whilst he was balancing in his mind his love against the laugh of the world, he received the following letter, which turned the scale at once, and gave his fears of contempt to the winds.

"S I R,

Though perhaps I may incur your derision for my vanity in imagining myself capable of giving your mind the least disturbance, yet I confess myself unequal to the thought of your being so abandoned in your principles, as not to feel some anxiety concerning the fate of a young creature, driven out
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in a strange town by your unworthy treatment of her ; but, sir, I have happily regained my dear father's protection, under which I congratulate both myself and you upon my happy escape ; my portion would inevitably have been wretched beyond expression, nor could you, sir, have always suppressed the keen pangs of remorse for depriving a poor creature of her only possession ; if you would enjoy true felicity, let me be the last you will ever attempt to reduce to a condition more deplorable than either poverty, sickness, or the horrors of a prison. Oh ! think of the curses ascending from bitterness of heart to that just being, who will avenge the cause of injured innocence, and however long the stroke may be suspended, it will, at last, fall with insupportable weight. I forgive you the injury you intended me, for when I consider my brother's wickedness, it almost reduces your crime to nothing. I wish you happiness, therefore consequently should rejoice, if this well intended exhortation, should awaken you to a sense of your present state, and incline you hereafter to merit a better name than the destroyer of peace and innocence.

N. B."

Captain Seymour was so touched at this lively picture of innate goodness, that he no longer hesitated to make this amiable woman ample amends for the affront he had given her, and uneasiness she had suffered. He immediately called upon Mr. Blissworth, and without mentioning the letter he had received, or appearing to have any particular scheme in view, informed himself of his father's address, and wrote a very genteel letter, apologizing for his former designs, and offering his hand and fortune to Nancy, begged her father would use his
utmost

utmost influence; as he was well assured, except her just resentment, she had no other objections; that if he would favour him with a line, he would come down and lay all his circumstances and connexions sincerely before him, that he might be convinced his present intentions were strictly honourable, and that he had the power of accomplishing the utmost he would promise.

The old man (an honest, plain, industrious farmer) received this letter with astonishment, as Nancy had not given them the particulars of either this gentleman's, or her brother's behaviour; but she now explained the whole matter. The honest man got a neighbour to scratch an answer, which amounted to no more than many professions of his being sensible of the honour the gentleman did his daughter, but that she would not consent to receive him, unless he would promise her she should never be compelled to see her brother more. This condition was cheerfully complied with, and, in six weeks time, Nancy Blissworth became Mrs. Seymour. This transaction was a secret to the noble Captain Blissworth, until he received a letter from Mr. Seymour, which contained a bank note for five hundred pounds, telling him that was all he must ever expect from him, as he had sold his own commission, and was retired with his lady with an intention to commence country squire; and that he had been accepted merely upon his giving a solemn promise of breaking off all connexions with him, for reasons he might learn hereafter. Blissworth was thunderstruck at this intelligence, damned the minx, let her be who she would, for her antipathy to him, extolled his friend's generosity to the skies, and was immediately a colonel in imagination. He waited some time before he advanced another step towards the ambitious height he aimed at; but an
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unexpected opportunity presenting itself, he did not fail to improve it, and gained the eminence of major; here he stuck for some time, but, upon a war breaking out, several new regiments were raised, and so eager was he to be dubbed Colonel Blissworth, that he exchanged his majority in an established corps with the favourite of a great man, for the rank of colonel, on a new and uncertain establishment, without requiring any consideration. He was not sensible of his folly, until peace reduced him to half pay; a great reduction of his revenue! and would have been severely felt by him, but for the consoling reflection, that his title of consequence was confirmed to him, and might perhaps recommend him, with his other striking qualifications, to some woman of fortune.

Such was this big man, who considered the completion of his wishes at hand, on being so fortunately cast in company with Mrs. Pinkney. We should not have been so circumstantial in this gentleman's history, but that we are well assured, there are many Colonel Blissworths, who derive their origin, and owe their rise to as mean and unworthy foundation as he did, which is the cause that military gentlemen, though in themselves extremely meritorious, undergo an indiscriminate judgment and contempt with those men, who bring this slur upon the profession, and, when traced, are found to be neither better nor worse than our hero, who is indeed a scandal to the military cloth.

We left him in much impatience for the lady's waking, which did not happen for above an hour after, but rather than not shine, he condescended to display his lustre to vulgar eyes. He immediately whipped his two humble companions, over into Germany, and made them witnesses of such extraordinary exploits, as no hero, but a Draw-
cansir,

canfir, could pretend to equal: a violent jolt decomposing the squire, he began to rub his eyes, and, when he had rendered them capable of distinguishing objects, expressed no small astonishment to find they had during his nod reached Finchley Common.

Madam thought proper on finding the gentlemen were awake to open her fair eyes, and declared she had ever till then deemed it impossible to sleep in a stage, but now acknowledged her error. It would be endless to relate the many impertinences committed by the commander and Mrs. Pinkney; be it therefore sufficient to say, that they arrived at Barnet, where the breakfast furnished Mrs. Pinkney with numberless opportunities of displaying her (no) consequence, by affecting so much delicacy as to be incapable of eating or drinking whatever this well frequented place could accommodate her with. It would be well, if all those gentlemen and ladies, whose quality and consequence are confined to a stage coach, would take this hint and consider, that so far from making that important figure they aim at, they only discover their ass's ears, which perhaps might otherwise be concealed by their lion's covering. The colonel indeed, from his ignorance of genteel life, and an absurd notion he had contracted, that to play the gentleman was to play the bear, conceived no small idea of his fellow traveller, and thought her the best bred, wittiest and handsomest woman he had ever been in company with. The Welchman, who was descended in a straight line from the famous Llewellen bore no inconsiderable part in the conversation, and never were three personages so equally great, and equally little, as this small assembly: as for the two women before mentioned, they had too much natural understanding not to perceive they were over-looked by their fellow

fellow travellers, and therefore, with an humility truly exemplary, or rather contempt for the slight they sustained, they preferred being upon a footing with the maid, to sitting at a distance, and eating that breakfast they must pay for uncomfortably with the fine mistress and the finer gentleman. The coach-man summoned the good company before the lady had met with any thing to suit her appetite, and, upon their treating him with undue neglect, began to grow very vociferous: the gentleman called him a boor for having so little consideration for the lady; but he surlily replied, that he was to remember himself, and not neglect his master's business, because a lady was so nice, that nothing would please her; and, for his part, he had stayed his usual time, and would carry off those passengers that were ready, and the others had better take a post-chaise, that they might travel at their leisure. The colonel tossed up his head with no small meaning, but did not chuse to open till he had got into the coach, and was driven off; his choler then rose, and he bestowed a volley of execrations upon the fellow's brutality, and declared it was with difficulty that he had restrained himself from severely correcting his audacity. The lady commended his prudence in not encountering with such an Hottentot, who was beneath his notice, but the descendant of Llewellyn protested, that had he been present at the whole transaction, his resentment of the insult the lady had sustained would have infallibly hurried him beyond the bounds of discretion: the colonel was nettled at Mr. Owen's indirect reflection upon his courage, and to convince the lady that it was not in the least defective, he gave them a most surprising relation of the defeating three highwaymen upon Sutton-Coldfield. This gentleman dealt exceedingly in the
mar.

marvellous, which was obvious to one of the plain companions, who presumed to say, from a suspicion she conceived of the colonel's real courage, and in order, if they should happen to meet with any collectors, to render him thoroughly ridiculous, "It is a great happiness, sir, at this juncture, to travel under the protection of a gentleman of your valour and experience; for I was informed to day that this road is much infested with highwaymen."

The colonel's attention was instantly engaged, for praises are food for the vain, whether bestowed by my lord or a chimney-sweeper, though not equally substantial. "Fear nothing, said he, madam; for I give you my honour, this arm, and this weapon, pointing to his trusty toledo, shall be your defence, and, as I have a great respect for the fair sex, I would not expose them to unnecessary apprehensions; for you must understand I should not encounter my enemy to such a disadvantage, as out of this or that window, nodding his head alternately, but should throw myself into the road, and cut and slay without mercy." The simple approbation this shrewd woman had expressed, was so pleasing, that the colonel at dinner, unwilling to lose one admirer, proposed, that as they were all fellow travellers, they should be all messmates; and, "madam, said he, if you will condescend to permit your woman to sit down at table with you, we shall not think her unworthy, as much worse company must be dispensed with in a public conveyance: the lady graciously consented that Rachel should be admitted upon a more intimate footing, and the day was passed with great satisfaction. In the evening, as the colonel was shining upon a particular subject, suddenly the coach received a great shock, and, before they could recover their surprise, over they went with a great violence: the ladies

screamed, and the gentlemen swore extravagantly; but Mr. Owen's Man, being on horseback, was very expeditious in assisting his master, and fellow-sufferers, and got them all safe out of their perilous situation. This disaster interrupted their good humour for some time, but a good supper, and comfortable repose, so far refreshed them, that they met in the morning with quite different faces. Mrs. Pinkney's forehead was a little scarified; but then the reflection that it might have been her eye, or her nose, reconciled her to what many ladies of more philosophy would have reckoned a very great misfortune. The company ascended the carriage with reluctance, as it now seemed more tremendous than ever, but the all-eloquent colonel exerted himself so successfully for the amusement of the ladies, that he lulled their cares into a pleasing oblivion.

The third day's journey brought the company upon that very spot, where their knight-errant had so singularly distinguished himself by an unequal combat with three robbers, and obtained so memorable a victory; or, in three words, they entered upon Sutton Coldfield. The hero began again to expatiate upon that great action, and several notable circumstances occurred to his recollection, as they drew nearer and nearer the scene of glory, when suddenly all his laurels were blasted by the abrupt appearance of a couple of suspicious looking fellows. The colonel had the advantage of his companions being seated at the only window from which they were visible in their retreat behind a few trees close by the road, for the better convenience of a sudden attack. The blood forsook his cheek, which, as it was a deep red, intermixed with purple, must be too evident not to be perceived by the whole company: they enquired if he was ill, he artfully com-

complained of a violent pain in his head, and said he fancied a short nap, if the ladies would excuse him, would be very salutary, and that as a back seat from the manner of those carriages being hung, was more commodious for such a purpose he should take it as a favour if Mrs. Rachel would accommodate him with her place for half an hour or so; Rachel immediately consented, but the change was no sooner adjusted than she heartily repented her compliance, for before the colonel could affect, with any tolerable grace, to have resigned himself to the arms of Morpheus, the coach-man stopped, and acquainted the gentlemen and ladies that it would not be long before they were attacked, as the highwaymen had posted themselves at a convenient distance on the left hand side of the road. Rachel, with terrified aspect, cried out, "Colonel! colonel Blissworth! for heaven's sake give me my place again," but the colonel put her off with a snore, nor was he to be roused by the cries of the whole company, nor several hearty shoves given him by the royal Welchman. "Ladies, said Mr. Owen, don't be frightened, though that gentleman, whose immediate province it is to defend the fair, and whose arm and sword you were exhorted to rely upon, has deserted you: yet could my resistance avail you, I would not hesitate to make it; but, I think, it is more advisable for us to part with a small sum than to endanger our lives; therefore Mrs. Rachel, change places with me, and I will address these men in such language, as shall, at least, secure you from ill treatment: so saying, he undauntedly threw himself to that window they expected the attack would be first made upon, and was prepared with an handsome speech to receive them; but, to the colonel's great confusion and disappointment, they beset each window, and po-

lately accepted of what the ladies and Mr. Owen thought proper to bestow upon them : but the colonel still affecting to sleep, they rifled his pockets, seized his watch, and not being able to divest his little finger of its elegant ornament without some difficulty, the fellow's proposed cutting it off, and said the ladies could not reckon such an action inhuman, as the man must infallibly be dead, or they should have roused him before then. This was too serious a business not to be interrupted, the colonel not having resolution to lose even a little finger to preserve his reputation, but hastily opening his eyes, said, " gentlemen, I intreat you would have a little patience, and I will help you to it immediately, as I understand the method of taking it off : " " Far be it from us, replied the highwaymen, to oppress the weak : " he soon presented them with it, and, with a respectful bow to the ladies and Mr. Owen, and a sarcastic glance at the noble officer, they rode off. The colonel, whose front was unknown to shame, said, it was a mighty ugly business to be taken so unprepared, and a sword would have availed but little against a brace of balls. The laugh was against him for some time, but, upon his humorously enough begging quarter, the company had too much good nature to pursue the jest when it began to grow painful ; and therefore dropped the subject ; but poor Mr. Blissworth found himself at an infinite loss for conversation, for he had not only been robbed of his watch and money, but likewise of his common place topics. Mrs. Pirkney was far from being displeased at the pusillanimity of her admirer, as she imagined it rendered him fitter for the design she was forming against him. In the evening, when they reached their goal for that night, she begged the favour of Colonel Blissworth to step into a private parlour
with

with her for a few minutes : he attended the lady immediately, when the artful Jezebel addressed him in the following terms ; “ Colonel, said she, as I have conceived a very high opinion of your honour, and the recent fright we have had convincing me of my imprudence in travelling with a considerable sum about me, I shall esteem myself much obliged to you, if you will take the care of two hundred and fifty pounds, until we arrive at our journey’s end.” The colonel was quite elated at the compliment and proof of the lady’s confidence, and accepted of the trust with so much unnecessary parade and circumlocution, as apparently evinced it was not common for him to be held in so much consideration. The golden bait succeeded and confirmed his intire belief of all that Rachel had related, and he that night came to a resolution of attacking the widow so vigorously, as to render the refunding unnecessary : pursuant to which, he did so bescrape her in the morning, and compliment her all day, that his Welsh friend, at whose house he was going to spend three months, began to smother his intentions, and took an opportunity at the next baiting to tax him with it. He ingenuously confessed he was right in his conjectures, and begged he would lend a hand towards bringing the business to a speedy issue. The Welchman promised his best assistance ; they soon resumed their wonted situations, and Mr. Owen began to shine in his turn by saying, he foresaw that this journey would produce a match, and begged he might be accepted as father : the colonel shewed his white teeth, and the widow endeavoured to blush at this intimation ; the women gaped for the meaning, and were not long in discovering it. Mrs. Pinkney was determined to proceed with caution, and therefore intreated Mr. Owen not to deceive her, but

give her a just account of Colonel Blissworth's family and circumstances; Mr. Owen assured her, he was of the rank he appeared to be, as to his fortune he believed it was but very small, his family genteel, but he unfortunately was neither the eldest son, nor the favourite; that he was certain he was both good natured and generous, and did believe that whatever lady condescended to honour him with her hand, would never have any reason to repent her choice. This was more than sufficient to engage Mrs. Pinkney's consent, and after a month's continuance at Chester, for that very purpose, she received a lawful claim to the title of Colonel Blissworth's lady. She had previous to her nuptials engaged, that the utmost secrecy might be observed, until her return from Ireland, told them the gentleman, whose house she was going to, was both a relation and trustee, and that she would give him notice, that she intended soon to relieve him of his trouble, and to break the matter by degrees, as he had it in his power, if she absolutely disoblged him, to inquire her circumstances. All this was judged but reasonable, and the time and manner of disclosing this stolen wedding was submitted to the lady's discretion; Mr. Owen offered to accompany her to the head, with her dear colonel, but she declined it, lest the thing should get air too soon, so that Rachel, and her mistress, were accommodated with an easy post-chaise: the colonel not chusing to expose Mrs. Blissworth on any consideration to any further stage-coach inconveniences. In due time they reached the head, and a packet sailing the next morning, they put themselves into it, and in twelve hours were wafted over to Dublin, where they soon provided themselves with lodgings, in which they sat down very contentedly, and Mrs. Blissworth
once

once more changed her name, and reported herself by the maid Rachel to be the wife of one Mr. Smith, an East India captain. We must now return to Mr. and Mrs. Clive, who were in the happy possession of an easy fortune, and each other's unfeigned affection? my lord—was gone to England, and was not much approved by the Irish, but they were obliged to receive him a second time. He was parsimonious to the last degree, made an advantage of every post in his gift, had introduced to the ruin of many families the pernicious fashion of gaming, did, both ladies and gentlemen, without distinction, the honour to pick their pocketers, and sir, or madam, was the greatest favourite, who had most to lose. Mr. Clive purchased a very handsome estate with the money Mr. Spranger obliged my lord to refund, kept a chariot and an elegant table, which was sufficient to gain him a number of Irish friends and acquaintance. Miss Charlotte had many admirers, but continued her whimsical, chearful humour, and declined many advantageous offers, with the strange declaration, that her time for being in love was not yet come, and she never would marry a great estate; besides, brother, said she, one day after requesting him to relieve her from the persecution of a new conquest, I can tell you I reserve myself for my cousin Frank, I like his character much, and shall not be obliged to conceal one of my grand objections to matrimony, the changing my name. I really wish Charlotte, returned her brother, to punish you at once for all your folly and cruelty to your admirers, that Frank may not like you, when you do see him; then brother, retorted she, I can but remain Charlotte Clive still; for I positively do not find so kind an inclination in my heart at present, towards any one of your sex, as to make so great

a compliment as sacrifice my beloved liberty to him.

Mrs. Smith soon enquired, and was informed where Mr. Clive lived, and having contrived to get a sight of him, found his person greatly exceed her expectations, and had laid her plan of operation for some time, therefore proceeded accordingly. She imagined she should have no easy task to gain this man to her purpose, attached, as she understood he was, to his wife, and that wife so amiable a woman, as the merchant had described her; but she was determined to leave no means untried to effect her design, but had all her hopes blasted at once; for the second day, after her arrival, Mrs. Clive received a letter from her mama, requesting her to come over as soon as possible, as Mr. Elliot was thought by the physicians to be in a deep decline, and earnestly wished to see her before he died. Mrs. Clive was greatly shocked at this intelligence, and conjured her husband, by the affection he bore her, to embark for England with the utmost expedition, as she never could be happy, if she did not arrive in time to gratify her father's earnest wish. Mr. Clive felt the utmost duty and respect for this good gentleman, and judged of his wife's anxiety by the pain he himself suffered at the thoughts of losing so valuable a parent and friend: he therefore engaged their passage in the very next packet, whose departure depended intirely upon the winds. Miss Charlotte said she would answer for it this sudden journey would turn out very satisfactory, as she was of opinion they should find Mr. Elliot recovered in a greater degree than their fears would suffer them to think for, and that she herself should snap up her cousin Frank: every body, she added, had some thing to bring them to the end of their lives, why not as well to their destiny, and she did believe

believe she was to be carried off by an accident ; neither her brother nor sister took the least notice of her whimsical flight, upon which she continued, I foresee my wedding will be ushered in with all the solemn pomp of a funeral, and perhaps not unapily, as I may bury all my felicity at that juncture ; you two shall act as mutes, for never did I behold such dolorous countenances. “ Charlotte, returned Mr. Clive, your mirth is always ironical ;” and brother, said she, I may now retort, that your gravity is both unbecoming, and for ought you know without foundation ; for my part I have so little faith in the opinion of physicians, that I would sooner take a lease of a life they had resigned to the operations of nature and comfortable administrations, than one they had so far hopes of as to pour down a quantity of nauseous potions. Mr. Clive went out immediately, and returned in half an hour, to inform his wife, that the utmost expedition would be necessary in whatever preparations she chose to make for her voyage, as he had engaged their passage in the first packet, which only waited for a wind. Mrs. Clive professed herself infinitely obliged by this instance of her husband’s assiduity to promote her happiness, and, as she proposed taking but few things, in three hours they were quite in readiness, but were not summoned till twelve o’clock at night, and, having a brisk and favourable gale, reached the head at day light that morning. They rested that day, and dispatched a man to Chester to procure a post-chaise to meet them as far as was practicable, and the next morning taking horses to prevent any delay, the chaise met them at Denbigh, and they reached Chester that night.

The next morning so impatient was Mrs. Clive, that they proceeded on their journey, and in four days arrived at Mr. Elliot’s. The family was

vastly surpris'd at this expedition, and Mr. Elliot said, he believ'd he had brought them upon a false errand, for he found his health greatly amended, which put them all in spirits. Mr. Clive told the view his sister came out with, and they all press'd him to send his cousin an invitation that they might have the pleasure of mortifying her, if she did not succeed. Mr. Clive went over to Spranger-hall, and met with such a reception from his worthy friend, as only such a heart as his could give, or have the least conception of. My boy, said he, I don't know whether to be concern'd or not at my noble villainous brother's behaviour; as perhaps, if he had not shewn himself in his proper colours, I should have been so weak as not to have asserted my right, the benefit of which you now enjoy; as for his gifts of places and court favours, let him bestow them upon the unworthy, fawning sycophant: he did well to object to your counting house education, and I did not see the drift of it then, but I am now convinced, that he was only afraid you should be too honest to pimp for him, or answer any other of his courtly vices and purposes: Well but, Frank, continued the old gentleman, his heart overflowing with kindness and satisfaction, what, no hopes of a boy? Mr. Clive replied, that he never had a prospect of that happiness till then, if he was not cut out of his chance by Mrs. Clive's agitation of mind, and great fatigue. The old gentleman, forgetting what his friend Elliot had suffered, blessed the lucky chance that had brought them to England, and given him another opportunity of being a godfather! we will have it called Frank Spranger, said he; these marks of real affection were very grateful to Mr. Clive; come, said Mr. Spranger, it is not right to deprive our friends of your company, I am but one, there-fore

fore ought to have come to you, not you to me." I am ready to accompany you now to Mr. Elliot's, and as they went along, "what, interrogated he, has not Charlotte got her a husband yet?" "Sir, replied Mr. Clive, Charlotte is very difficult, and is not over fond of the men;" "I don't wonder at it, returned Mr. Spranger, my lord was enough to give her an antipathy; but she is a good girl, and we must get her an English husband: I cannot consent to her living in Ireland;" "you know, sir, said Mr. Clive, my sister is very sprightly, and once or twice in the gaiety of her heart, she has declared she liked her cousin Frank Clive's character so well, that she will reserve herself for him," "and is a wise girl for her pains, returned Mr. Spranger, I like him too, and see no objection. I must have an hand in it;" "but, sir, replied Mr. Clive, the principal article is doubtful. You know women cannot chuse for themselves, and suppose he should not like her." "Fiddle faddle, what supposes are here, said Mr. Spranger? I am not blind, notwithstanding I am no boy, but can distinguish the agreeable from the plain, and can tell you where one is more pleasing than Charlotte, ten thousand are much inferior. I should not have thought, continued he, of his not liking her." Mr. Spranger saluted the ladies with friendly satisfaction, and said, I understand, Charlotte, you are become a fortune-hunter, but assure you your choice has intirely my approbation, of which you shall receive a convincing proof if we can bring it to bear. Sir, it is a pleasure to me, replied Miss Clive, to divert my friends, and your raillery has such a mixture of kindness in it, that it is more grateful to me than the highest commendation of the rest of my acquaintance. I esteem you too much,

much, returned Mr. Spranger, to wish to hurt you by an unkind jest, but you have such a fund of unaffected good humour, that it requires some philosophy, in even such an old fellow as I, not to be proposing myself." " Unless you really meant to be accepted, said Miss Charlotte, you would find yourself in an ugly scrape, sir, if you were to tender your person to me, for you are the only man I have ever yet seen that I could not refuse; nay, if I had the least prospect of success, I am afraid I should be tempted to exceed those bounds of decorum so essential and proper for the observation of our sex." " Methinks, said Mr. Elliot, you make a good advance now, if the gentleman is not absolutely lost in dull insensibility." " I profess myself so generous, returned Mr. Spranger, (cold I hope you will not think me) as to be willing to give my rival fair play, but if any insurmountable obstacle should arise, I here declare myself ready and willing to save you from the reproachful character of an old maid, and that is engaging a vast deal in my opinion. However, Frank, I seriously insist upon it, that you send for your cousin to be witness of your happiness; it is due to him for his former friendship." Mr. Clive assured him he might depend upon his obeying his commands, they then enquired concerning the health of all their neighbours. " Mrs. Elliot replied, they had lost only one family, but had gained another which was equally agreeable: Mrs. Haughton, said she, has sold her house, having determined to reside constantly in London, during her present disorder, which will probably continue so long as her life, for the advantage of being near her favourite physician, and the purchaser is one Mr. Seymour, formerly a Captain; his lady is an excessive worthy woman, but as her merit is not discoverable

discoverable to every person with whom she is acquainted, some of the flighty ones pretend to say she is of mean extraction, and no education, but, as affability is meritorious with me, whether in the possession of high or low, rich or poor, so I find her a most eligible acquaintance, add to which, she is a great favourite with our common friend, bowing to Mr. Spranger." "I like her, said the honest man, because she is no observer of ceremony; you may be as easy at her house as your own, speak your sentiments freely without the least danger of giving offence, having your meaning misinterpreted, or your conversation retailed to the next visitant. In short, for I love to deal plainly, it is the only family I enjoy true satisfaction with, when I am deprived of my second home, as I consider this house. The captain is a facetious companion, and I believe he has been a sad dog in his youth; he confesses indeed he owes his reformation to his wife, and it is a maxim of mine to esteem people for what I find them, not what they may have been; for I think a reformed mind is more valuable than one that has plodded on in a continued beaten path, merely from being exempt from the same temptations which may have misled a less unworthy person. What is the human heart, continued the old gentleman, pleased with his own reflections, but replete with a strong bias and propensity to every vice and folly; the natural current may be too rapid for youth to resist; therefore youth is intitled to great allowance, and tender consideration; but when a mind confirmed by time and practice, in a right way of thinking, and principles, flies out again a wild goose chase, I then have neither patience nor temper. They all smiled; "you are right, continued he in your conjecture, I had our youthful peer in my eye, when I breathed that invective."

vective." The evening proving bad Mr. Spranger was prevailed upon to break through one of his established customs of never sleeping out of his own house, except upon a journey. Mr. Clive next morning dispatched a letter of invitation, pursuant to the injunction of his friend, to his cousin Frank, requiring his company immediately. Mrs. Elliot was vastly concerned when she became acquainted with her daughter's condition, at the great hazard she had exposed herself to, and was not quite free from apprehension for some time, lest the consequence might prove fatal, she omitted no preventive caution and assiduity, and insisted her daughter should not return, until that critical period was over; this fixed their continuance in England to at least six months, to the general satisfaction of all parties; several days passed over without their receiving any account of the merchant, Mr. Clive was both concerned and surprised, and at the expiration of a week wrote to Mr. Sprat his partner, begging the favour of him to put them out of their suspense; the very next post brought them the mortifying news, that Mr. Clive had been gone to Hamburgh three weeks before the receipt of their letter; they having lost a correspondent of consequence, which rendered it necessary that one of them should personally engage with another, that possibly he might not return in less than a twelvemonth: this information was a real disappointment to them all, not merely for cutting them out of a good deal of mirth, but as they considered him as a valuable friend and relation, they greatly wished his acquaintance; as they were certain they had no inconsiderable share in his friendship. Charlotte said her conquest would keep cold without the least detriment, unless an Hamburgher should forestal her intentions. Mr.

Spranger

Spranger was surprisingly chagrined, and declared, he had rather have given a thousand pounds than have had his schemes frustrated by such cross accidents; and wished the correspondent had been at rest a twelve month sooner, or had had his existence prolonged till the ensuing year, then Charlotte, he said, might have had an opportunity of seeing Hamburgh: but, continued he, your next journey to Ireland, good folks, shall be but a short one, for I find our part of the world too much enlivened by the addition of your companies to consent to any more long absences; they assured him it would add not a little to their satisfaction, and enjoyment of life, to be permitted to spend it in their native country, that they considered themselves in a kind of exile, on the other side the water; for notwithstanding Dublin contained many worthy families, and that they met with an agreeable reception every where, yet Spranger-Hall, nor Elliot place, was not in their neighbourhood, and consequently their felicity must be incomplete; wheedlers all, said Mr. Spranger; I warrant now if one could have a peep into your hearts, your distance from us is rendered very tolerable, by your being from under the inquisitive eye and observation of a couple of old fellows; what say you, friend Elliot? it is a natural conclusion, sir, I acknowledge, returned Mr. Elliot, but I hope our children are as great an exception to this too general rule, as I am sensible (without vanity) we both are to the generality of old fellows, who delight in rendering their company a constraint and incumbrance, instead of agreeable to their children. I only wonder such men can be surprised to find themselves avoided as much as possible; for I think a teasing, unreasonable old fellow is a monstrous evil.

Mr.

Mr. and Mrs. Seymour having seen nothing of them for a whole week, came over to enquire into the reason, and expressed much surprize on finding the family so greatly augmented. This was too good an handle for Mr. Spranger to neglect, ah! said he, madam, we look for a still further augmentation, for, softly be it spoken, I am in the high road to be a grandfather, who knows but we may all at the long run be relations; (Mrs. Seymour being then pregnant) if you do but contrive so well as to have a daughter, for ours is infallibly to be a boy; the captain and his wife equally admired the two young ladies, and esteemed the gentleman. They spent a vast deal of their time together, and their days glided away in the utmost tranquillity, until Mrs. Seymour was overtaken by the extremity of her condition, and, as if she played indeed at cross purposes, did not oblige Mr. Spranger with the much wished for girl, but produced a very fine boy; the good gentleman soon reconciled himself to this disappointment, by saying a year or two hence would do as well, for the girl's appearance, as he thought, that the husband should have the advantage in point of age. Mrs. Clive was as successful as her neighbour in her recovery, and was likewise blessed with a son, only two months later than Mrs. Seymour. Mr. Spranger was quite elated at this event, examined the infant's features (with the assistance of a new pair of spectacles) most accurately, and ingeniously discovering a great resemblance of both father and mother, he humorously said, "it had nothing of the peer about it, notwithstanding his good intentions." The day was fixed for the christening, he was the principal sponsor at the repeated request of Mr. Clive, and, with a heart-felt satisfaction, bestowed the single name of Spranger upon

upon the infant; this he accepted as the highest compliment imaginable, and for two or three days was not thoroughly pleased with any conversation, that did not in some respect allude to his Godson Spranger. Soon after this event they began to think of revisiting Ireland for the last time; the estate Mr. Clive had purchased in that kingdom was so much improved, that he had no doubt of disposing of it to very great advantage. Mrs. Elliot made one motion for the ladies to be left behind; but was immediately over-ruled by superior authority, it not being lawful in the opinion of the head of this family to part man and wife. The dear pledge of their affection was to continue at its grand-papa's, which he said was a sufficient security for their making a quick return. Charlotte, notwithstanding the danger she had been exposed to in her first passage, could not be prevailed to forego her attachment to the fate of her brother and sister, she declared, they were all the world to her, and she would gladly encounter any difficulties, which they might be involved in. Mrs. Clive was truly sensible of Charlotte's affection, and said, without her company the journey would seem a weighty undertaking.

Having settled this point, I must desire leave to look back upon the colonel's lady, whom we must for a time call by the newly assumed name of Smith. This woman having wrote an epistle to Mr. Clive, which will be communicated hereafter, dispatched a porter with it to his house, who hastily returned and informed her, that the family had sailed that morning for England; her astonishment and mortification at this intelligence is inconceivable, "Fly back, said she eagerly to the man, and enquire when they return." The porter obeyed, and with great expedition and punctuality brought her word, that it was quite uncertain,

certain, as Mrs. Clive's father was very ill and desired to see her, either his death or recovery might possibly send them over soon, as they had left all their affairs unsettled, and were but indifferently prepared for a long stay. This account, in some measure, revived her, as she hoped it would occasion only a month or two's delay to this pretty scheme: how to come off with the colonel she was at loss, but, having a fruitful invention, it occurred to her, that she could from time to time raise difficulties in the settling her affairs, that might sufficiently amuse him, and how to make some advantage of the intervening period was the grand question? she could not live without an intrigue; but the accomplishment of such a point, required her utmost skill to prevent detection; she therefore resolved upon a journey to Cork, where she fell in with a Dublin trader from Bristol, who freed her from all expences, and made her many handsome presents: thus did this woman change one scene of iniquity for another without the least compunction upon earth. Under various pretences she drew her gallant into several Dublin jaunts; but her expectations were not answered in obtaining the satisfactory information she sought for.

Rachel was left upon the spot, with orders frequently to reconnoitre the premisses, but as she could neither write nor read, she was but ill qualified to act in the character of a spy; but time, that infallible remedy for every evil, at last restored this family to their former habitation in Stephen's-green, upon which intelligence, she gladly renounced her Cork acquaintance, and returned to a new lodging, provided for her by her handmaid, where she passed a week without making any attempt to see Mr. Clive. Rachel was commissioned to procure some acute fellow a porter, to deliver

deliver the letter this wicked woman had elaborately composed, and valued herself not a little upon. It was as follows,

“S I R,

If you have the courage to venture to make a visit this afternoon to Mrs. Hewson's upon Ormond Quay, you will, upon enquiring for an English lady, her lodger, be introduced to an old acquaintance; you may prepare for a surprize as perhaps I am the last person you would expect to meet with in Dublin, and should take it as a favour if you would not mention the receipt of this note to any one, as it will be proper, you should be able on introducing me to your friends to give me a name, and assign some reason, for my visiting this kingdom. In short, at your peril be it, if you fail either this appointment, or complying with my request; you can fear nothing, as my hand denotes me to be a petticoat challenger, and consequently a peaceable one,

I am, sir,

according as you behave,

your friend and servant,

Penelope S.”

This note was sent about one o'clock, the hour Mr. Clive usually dressed at, the ladies happened to be out upon a morning visit: the porter was ordered to say, if any questions were asked, that he received it from a very handsome lady just arrived from England. Mr. Clive was exceedingly puzzled to guess who it could be that could send him so romantic and mysterious an epistle
(the

(the porter had been sent off by the servant, before he could undergo an examination.) He read it over several times, without being able to form the least conjecture of the author; what can it mean, said he, to himself, the writing, is delicate, the expressions uncommon? shall I, or shall I not, indulge my curiosity in visiting this fair incognito? no bad consequence can attend it; am I not master of my own actions, if she be a wanton, and certainly her stile is not free from levity? her lure is not cast out upon a proper object, for, whilst single, I was ever proof against the snares of the wanton, and as a married man, I have ever shuddered at the bare thought of adultery; and to keep me stedfast in the right path, have I not a wife possessed of every accomplishment of mind and person? Yes, my heart shall sooner cease to beat than prove unfaithful to her. Thus armed I bid defiance to every female wile.

Whilst Mr. Clive was thus deliberating with respect to his determination, he received a message from his wife and sister, that the lady at whose house they were had prevailed upon them to take a friendly dinner in their morning dresses, as they understood, if they came home, they should not have his company. This chance was the source of many evils to this amiable family; for had Mrs. Clive and her sister returned, according to their usual custom to dress, they would certainly have had the perusal of these artful lines; which proved a stumbling block to the unwary, and in the path of gallantry inexperienced. Mr. Clive, who, after having performed his dinner engagement, yielded to the impulses of his curiosity, and sought the dwelling of this sorceress: He was soon directed to the house, and knocking at the door pleased himself not a little with the thought of discovering

female

female shallow plot, or meeting with an agreeable acquaintance; but was for once led out of his depth; a servant opening the door, he enquired if an English lady newly arrived did not lodge there, and was answered in the affirmative, and desired to walk in. "Please to acquaint that lady, said he to the servant, that a gentleman is below who waits upon her, in consequence of a letter he received this morning." The boy instantly vanished, and, returning hastily, desired the gentleman to walk up into the dining room: Mrs. Smith immediately entered from her toilet, where she had exhausted her invention, in endeavouring to appear pleasing; but, upon casting her fine eyes upon the gentleman, she started with an affected surprize, that she had practised with assiduity in order to perform to perfection. "O heavens! cried she, sir, you did not receive a letter from me." "Madam, replied Mr. Clive, bowing respectfully, I am sorry I have surprized you, but it is indeed by your own appointment I take the liberty of waiting upon you, there is no mistake I am confident, taking the letter out of his pocket, in the superscription." "It mortifies me greatly, sir, returned she, with an air most aptly adapted to her expressions, to think what a strange light I must appear in to you, that familiar epistle was indeed intended for a gentleman of the name of Clive, but very different to you in person, though something like you; but I hope you will pardon the trouble I have innocently occasioned you, and return me the letter." Mr. Clive began to conceive a very decent opinion of her, as her appearance was all modesty and sincerity, the mistake he fancied was apparent, and he answered with great politeness, and some little gaiety, "There, madam, you must excuse me, I will, with your permission, retain it until I have an opportunity of delivering

delivering it to the very gentleman I find it was intended for, he is both my name-sake and first cousin, and if you will favour me with any commands as his deputy, I shall enjoy the double satisfaction of obliging him and rendering myself serviceable to you." Mrs. Smith, affecting to be under much perplexity replied, "I really find myself so far entangled by my frolic as to be in a manner inexcusable, unless I assign a reason for my proceedings. Know then, sir, that I am wife to an East-India captain, who is now at Madras, your cousin is his intimate friend and acquaintance, and as some particular business brought me to this city, I was confident, that my applying to him for his assistance in the transaction of it, and engaging him for my gallant to the public places, I should oblige both my husband and your relation. I have spent these last four years in Yorkshire, and did not continue an hour in London, so that upon being informed that your name was Francis Clive, I concluded you were my husband's friend settled in this country, and promised myself much innocent diversion at his surprize at finding me his challenger." Mr. Clive considered this as a humorous adventure, and without hesitation replied, "I am vastly pleased, madam, with this accident, and beg you will immediately accept of my house during your continuance in Ireland, my wife, I am certain, will take a pleasure in rendering the place agreeable to you. I will bring her to give you an invitation, and join in laughing at the odd chance that has brought us acquainted." This was by no means Mrs. Smith's scheme, and required a masterly stroke to get clear of; but her assurance was equal to every attempt, and she replied with great seriousness; "by no means, sir, I have often heard that Dublin is notorious for cen-
sure

sure and suspicion, perhaps every person, continued this artful woman, would not behold this affair with the same candour you are pleased to do, and I should die with mortification, if only the least sprinkling of scandal was to be cast upon my reputation: a married woman, sir, ought to be trebly circumspect in her conduct, as the venom often lodges with the husband, though expelled the breast of every other creature. I must therefore intreat you would let the knowledge of my folly rest with you, and leave the commencement of our acquaintance to some future day, and more proper accident than has now brought us together." Mr. Clive, though he really wished her to accept of the offer he had made her upon his cousin Frank's account, yet was prevailed upon to yield to her earnest request, and only said, "you would no sooner see my wife, madam, than your objections would be removed; for it is not only the partial husband, but all the world acknowledges her to be candour itself; she despises the inquisitive heads, and malicious hearts of those, that are ever seeking for, and assigning harsh motives and reasons for the conduct of her sex." Mrs. Smith found herself hurt by this encomium upon his wife, as it seemed to throw her at a great distance, and threaten her charms with a total neglect, but suppressing her mortifying and peevish reflections, she replied, "I doubt not the virtues of your lady, sir, but I will not consent to be exposed, therefore shall consider your compliance with this, perhaps, particularity of my humour, as the test of those civilities you teach me to expect from you." This plea was unanswerable. Mr. Clive thought her delicacy rather strained, but yet he believed it was delicacy, and resolved not to press her any farther, and only returned, "I submit it to your pleasure,

pleasure, madam, and am sorry I urged my request so far, but it proceeded from my desire of your receiving 'at my house, better accommodations than you can possibly meet with in a lodging; I have an appointment at seven o'clock, (looking upon his watch) therefore wish you a good evening, madam, and shall live in hopes of having soon the pleasure of ranking you amongst the number of my friends, as I shall ever esteem those that are friends to my cousin Frank." Mrs. Smith was now driven to her last shift; her fate with respect to Mr. Clive was wound up to its crisis, and now or never she must make a bold stroke to obtain a promise of a second visit, or give him up intirely, but she was hackneyed in deceitful practice, and with a well dissembled confusion, thus tried her last chance. "I wish, sir, hesitating as she spoke, it were possible (consistently with decorum) for me soon again to have the pleasure of seeing you; I indeed can apprehend neither impropriety nor misconstruction from such a gentleman as you, but I fear the world. I know not what I would say, I am a stranger in Dublin, have much business to transact, and no friend to advise with, nay all these disagreeable things, aggravated by the disappointment, I have this day met with from the pleasing deception of your name, had you but been my husband's friend."

Mr. Clive was really concerned for her, she acted her part so judiciously, and said, with no less earnestness than sincerity, "he could not, madam, have rendered you any service with more real willingness and pleasure than I should, if you did not, from too nice a sense of delicacy, put it out of my power; my house, my wife and myself, you may command if it pleases you, but fearful of in-

creasing

creasing her uneasiness, he added, but be it as to you seems best." Mrs. Smith appeared sensible of his extream obligingness, and resumed a greater degree of cheerfulness, and said, well, sir, grant me then this one indulgence; let this rencounter remain a secret, at least for some short time, I will weigh the consequences more minutely, and if you will do me the favour to call upon me in a day or two, I will in the interim determine what step to take, and will then take the liberty of acquainting you with it, and think myself much indebted to you for your politeness, and condescension; I heartily wish you a good evening, and hope I may expect to see you again. Mr. Clive, taking his leave, said, madam, you may depend upon seeing me, nor shall you have reason to think that curiosity alone could engage my attendance.

So soon as he had left her, she called Rachel; "tell me," said she, did you observe the insensible; he is much more agreeable in his person than my fine Mr. Clive; his behaviour exactly answers that base man's description of him; how little does he imagine that I have made such a bold advance towards his punishment: thus far, continued she exultingly, we sail before the wind, but I had almost betrayed myself several times, would you believe it, the good soul wanted to take us home to his doating piece, his curious wife; we should have made fine work of it then indeed: no prying wives for us, our designs will not bear so strict a scrutiny. I have now a new spur to my revenge on this family, besides the usage I received from that vile Frank, humbling this haughty, legat mistress, with whose great merit her fond husband officiously wounded my ears; she shall find the bands of wedlock but cobweb holds against my artifice: what a field for invention and stratagem

have I now before me? and I will give my ingenuity its full scope, nor stop, but at my own, or his destruction. We must be retired, Rachel, continued she, and move with the utmost circumspection, as on this cast depends our future fortune." The humble confidant begged to know how she gained so far upon him, as to obtain a second visit, to which this hardened wretch replied; "I'll tell thee all, my faithful and constant assistant.

I was reduced to the absolute necessity of making some advance, or throwing up my chance for ever; and in order to extort an offer from him of future attendance, I dissembled fears and apprehensions innumerable, and drove him so close, as I flattered myself that good manners alone must have moulded him to my purpose, but all in vain; a respect on his part, which only that being a wife could enjoy, was an insufferable impediment; and I was in direct terms obliged to ask the favour of his company;" "why, madam, returned Rachel, he must be stupid, not to be struck with your person, and wish to cultivate an acquaintance with you: I am sure as wise men as he can be, have done so, and were you not assured of his being rich, he would not be worth your notice, after such slighting behaviour." "O! Rachel, replied Mrs. Smith, you are mistaken, my heart is so far masculine as to despise an easy conquest; I myself fell from an eminence, and ever since I became the prey of one man, have considered all the sex as prey for me. Frank Clive has not my seduction to answer for, it is true, but his manner of casting me off, upon a trifling detection before my designs upon him were half accomplished, has dug the pit for his beloved cousin. I am sensible the ruin of this relation will wound him deeper, than any other stroke of fate or fortune, as he has

an uncommon affection for, and great opinion of him. This man's fall will swell my triumph beyond any thing I ever met with, and his remorse and sufferings will be grateful to my ears: I'll gall him to the soul, but such is the injustice of the world, he cannot feel the misery that I have; but now I have a refuge, the arms of Colonel Bliffworth will be open to receive me, if I can but make a purse to answer the great expectations I have given him; but, Rachel, I find my spirits begin to droop, fetch me my friendly cordial that will restore me to myself again, and then we will form new schemes.

Mr. Clive was not thoroughly satisfied with his conduct, he began to feel some qualms for having sought this woman out before he had communicated this curious letter to his wife and sister, that he might have had the sanction of their consent; his evil genius suggested to him that perhaps Mrs. Clive, all ingenuous and candid as she herself was, might be alarmed at this first step of curiosity taken without her knowledge, and so strongly did this unhappy apprehension prevail in his mind, as to determine him never to reveal it, unless upon her being introduced, she should express such particular approbation as to encourage him to lay every thing before her. He had taken this fatal resolution before the ladies returned, who attacked him with twenty interrogatories both customary and natural, why they had not had his company to tea? his own consciousness embarrassed and perplexed him, and he shuffled and cut so much in his excuses, that to any other eyes than theirs would have rendered him suspicious; but it was all agreeable to them, and matter for raillery, and so confident was Mrs. Clive of her husband's integrity,

openness of heart, and attachment to her, that not even a super-natural information would have been considered by her as any other than a delusion; thus one part deceived and the other deceiving: their domestic happiness remained for a long time unshaken, only to render the shock when it was received more severe.

In two days Mr. Clive began to think of performing his promise to Mrs. Smith, perhaps, said he, my delay may put her to some inconvenience in her affairs at least; I am bound in honour to shew her some civility on my cousin's account, who I am certain would not have been equally remiss to a friend of mine. With these sentiments, he left his own house, intending to make her a short morning visit, she received him with visible satisfaction, and took care to be perfectly prepared both in her dress and apartment: "Can you forgive me, sir, said she, if I acknowledge, I have experienced some little apprehensions, lest I should never have had the pleasure of seeing you more." "Your suspicions, madam, returned Mr. Clive, were not kind, and I hope you are now convinced they were void of foundation; how could you imagine I should presume to disappoint you? you must excuse my weakness, replied the deep designer, I was a little low spirited from finding myself in a strange country, destitute of both friends and relations; besides you, sir, are so happy in a lady that it must be laying a great constraint upon yourself to be absent from her, though for ever so short a time, was my heart capable of envy she would certainly be the object of it." "I hope, madam, returned Mr. Clive, that you are blessed with an husband as sensible of your merit, as I profess myself to be of my wife's, but it would be acknowledging myself blind not to perceive what is conspicuous

conspicuous to the whole world:" Mrs. Smith was stung to the quick at this reply, and with difficulty restrained herself from discovering her extreme mortification, at his insensibility with respect to her accomplishments, and unseasonable commendations of his wife; she could not, in spite of all her artifice, forbear saying, with a sort of peevish accent, "you are unfashionably fond of your lady, sir, were you to make such a declaration amongst the lively London sparks, they would banish you from their society." Mr. Clive did not approve of this speech, therefore intending to rebuke her ill-timed observation, replied, with a careless air, "from the abundance of the heart, madam, we are too apt to speak:" but resumed he with more seriousness, "I always look upon myself as secure from either ridicule or contempt, when I suffer my fondness for my wife to overflow only in the company of her own sex; sure it is no bad compliment to one lady for me to acknowledge that my affections are engaged, and my good opinion of the whole species enlarged and heightened by the conduct of her to whom I have solemnly devoted my whole life."

This was cutting with severity, and Mrs. Smith felt all the meaning of his expressions; she despised him, cursed his wife, and resolved to entangle him, in one short reflection; but to conceal her chagrin, she said, suppose we call another cause, for we absolutely grow serious: I hope, sir, you have not betrayed me to any one." "I give you my honour, replied Mr. Clive, I have not, and so scrupulously have I observed your injunctions, as to have sacrificed my veracity in some trivial points to preserve my trust inviolate." This answer restored Mrs. Smith's countenance to all its former graces and beauty; she considered the gaining of this point as a considerable acquisition; "I think myself

myself greatly obliged, said she, by this compliance with my request, and am concerned that I am confined to bare expressions only, but hereafter, perhaps, I may have the power of convincing you, that you have a grateful mind to deal with." This female Proteus then entered into a detail of the nature of her business, which was the recovery she said of some very considerable sums, in which several of the Dublin merchants were indebted to her husband; she had a letter of attorney, she said, to authorize her claim, and several recommendatory ones to indemnify her person; begged he would give her down the names of the most able counsel, that she might have the advantage of her adversaries, in tendering a retaining fee; added, that she waited for some bills of exchange from England, and then should begin the prosecution, unless they were willing to comply with the terms she had to propose. The deluded Mr. Clive recommended her in particular to one eminent professor in the law, at whose house, himself and family frequently visited. "Then, said he, madam, we shall by that means have the pleasure of cultivating an acquaintance with you, which will put a period to every clandestine proceeding." Mrs. Smith was much pleased with the method he prescribed, but said, "she must beg of him to look in upon her once or twice in the interim, as she should be glad to have his opinion of her pretensions, before she made any application to gentlemen, with whom it is well known to be a common practice to undertake any cause that could be warmly supported." This he thought a prudent precaution, and steadily promised his attendance and best advice. Upon this conclusion they parted, and he found his mind much relieved by the near prospect of his wife and sister's partaking of his visits.

They

They had now been only one fortnight in Ireland, yet a letter full of earnest intreaties for a speedy return reached, subscribed with the three several names of John and Charlotte Elliot and George Spranger; they had a very pleasing account of their little son's advancement, and Mr. Spranger, desired she would not present him with an Irish brother or sister, for he liked a family should be of the same country. Mr. Elliot had not been attacked by any return of his disorder. Mr. and Mrs. Seymour mentioned them often, and joined in requesting dispatch in the settling their affairs, and that Charlotte might prove a spur to their industry, she was threatened to be condemned to a state of perpetual virginity, if she did not appear at Spranger-Hall within four months from the date of that epistle. Thus was their minds relieved of every anxiety paternal, filial and friendly, and they were ready to promise themselves many happy days: but such is the life of man, that frequently a dead calm is only a prelude to a storm, and that we are never in so much danger, as when seemingly surrounded with fortune's favours; for suddenly she gives her wheel a contrary turn, which if not totally, at least in great measure, and for a long continuance, crushes all our blooming hopes: we are liable to be entangled in the maze of calamity, notwithstanding we endeavour and in appearance pursue a steady path. How infinitely then must our sufferings be aggravated, when we have the mortifying reflection, that we will fully step aside, and expose our heads to an impending destruction, which would have passed by us, if we had but adhered to our common road; the rock, on which the harmony of this family split, was not inevitable.

Mr.

Mr. Clive wandered from one place or track to another, until he was so far advanced to the brink of the precipice as not to be able to recover himself, all which might have been avoided, by acting up to that laudable ingenuousness by which he obtained his friends, his fortune, and his wife. Let his misfortunes, the consequence of his misconduct, prove a lesson of instruction and caution to the young mind, and never lose sight of that excellent admonition in holy writ, by which we are forbid to do evil that good may come of it, but patiently submit the disposition of every event to that being, in whose hand are both the present, past and future, and by whom every seeming accidental contingencies, are regulated and appointed with the nicest order.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.